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CATHOLIC LITURGY

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CATHOLIC LITURGY

ITS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

By

The Very Rev. GASPAR LEFEBVRE
O.S.B.

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DEDICATED to their Eminences
CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop
of Malines (1906), and CARDINAL
DUBOIS, Archbishop of Paris
(1920), who have so powerfully
contributed to the development
of the Liturgical Spirit in Belgium
and France.

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*Letter of his Lordship Mgr. Van Caloen, Bishop of Phocœa,
to the Author.*

VILLA S. BENOÎT, CAP D'ANTIBES.

October 15, 1920.

VERY REVEREND FATHER,

It has given me great pleasure to receive the proofs of LITURGIA which you have done me the honour to send to me. These learned pages have delighted me, and I read them eagerly, for although their subject matter was already familiar to me it is here set forth in a new dress, with perfect art and so simply that all can understand it.

But, reverend and dear Father, I am surprised you have chosen me, an old servant, quite worn out and good for nothing, in preference to so many young and able liturgists, to present this dish to the numerous guests at the liturgical banquet.

You do, indeed, excuse yourself by telling me that I love the liturgy and appreciate it at its full value; that I look upon it as a solid foundation of Christian life, as a fertile source of interior life and of the spirit of prayer, as a sure means of keeping our souls in union with the Church. You

go so far as to say that I was one of those who started the present liturgical movement in Belgium by the publication of the "Missel des Fidèles" in 1882 and by my memoir on the Communion of the faithful during Mass, presented to the Eucharistic Congress of Liège in 1889.

But how imperfect were those first attempts! They were based on the important works of Dom Guéranger and were nothing more than the sound of a trumpet, opening the way to really capable pioneers of the liturgy, of whom you are the perfect type.

How many years have passed away since then! For half a century religious obedience directed me to apply all my efforts first to the education of youth, then to the affairs of the Roman Curia, later to monastic administration in distant countries, and finally to the evangelisation of savages in the virgin forests of the Amazon. All this time I have been cut off from the habitual practice of the liturgy and now here I am, ending my days under the pleasant sun of the *Côte d'Azur*, occupied in contemplating the Creator in the wonders of nature and in bringing back to Him those still more wonderful works of His divine hands—the souls of men.

Where are the liturgical studies of those years of my monastic youth, now that I have passed through the storms of life?

I had a good will then; that was all. To-day I am content to watch others labour, especially my beloved brethren in St. Benedict, and by preference those whom I have seen at the work from their childhood, as I have seen you, reverend Father, and who even then gave promise of what we might expect when they reached maturity.

Shall I enter into details? Need I go on to analyse your excellent book? I think it would be superfluous. We will leave the reader to enjoy and to study it himself, an easy task indeed, because of the excellence of your plan and the lucidity with which you have expressed yourself.

LITURGIA is both serious and practical. An attentive reader will recognise that each assertion, each thought, each theory has its source in a text of Holy Scripture, in a passage from the Fathers, in a venerable Christian tradition.

What you have given us is not a work of poetical or artistic imagination, but a substantial and complete treatise. It is a real liturgical manual, opening the way not only to the practical understanding of the liturgy for the faithful, but also to the deeper

Catholic Liturgy

study of this important subject for the members of the clergy.

I congratulate you, reverend and dear Father, on the eminent service that you have rendered to earnest and faithful Catholics by publishing this book, and I sincerely hope that it may soon be in the hands of all.

GÉRARD VAN CALOEN, O.S.B.,

Bishop of Phoecea.




AT the present day we often hear the word "Liturgy." Of Greek origin and having the meaning of "public act," this word stands in most minds for something purely accessory in Christian life and is placed in the same category as Gothic ornament, long ceremonies and Gregorian chant. To such as these liturgy is merely a revival of ancient art, with which archæology is chiefly concerned, and possesses no interest for any but amateurs and antiquaries.

Why work so hard, say others, to reinstate things now out of date? Our modern popular devotions have been well tried, they are adapted to the times in which we live, they are approved by the Church; why attempt to root them up again and to replace them by devotions of bygone days?

Others again, without going so far, are content to look upon the liturgy as simply the organisation of exterior and public worship paid by the Church to God—the carrying out *in extenso* of her rubrics and ceremonies, intended only for priests.

To these last we reply that this is indeed the body, the visible part of the liturgy. But we must bear in mind that the liturgy has also a soul, which is invisible and for that reason, alas, too often ignored. This soul is the power of glorifying God and of sanctifying men which these objects, formulas and exterior rites possess. Who could tell what a source of grace and instruction these rites and ceremonies might be to us if we only knew how to profit by them.

The liturgy is the official worship of the Church. It is *par excellence* a social work, for it is the prayer and sacrifice offered by our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary for the salvation of the whole world and offered to God on the altar by the Catholic hierarchy invested with the priesthood of Christ, often in the presence of multitudes of the faithful and always in the name of and for all.

What a grand sight is this of Christian society throughout the ages paying to the most High the worship due to Him, either by the Pope in the Roman basilicas, by bishops in their cathedrals, or by priests in their parish churches and in all the sanctuaries of the world! How magnificent and secure is the organisation of the principal means of salvation—Sacrifice, Sacraments, Holy Scripture, Tradition and Sacramentals! Such are the materials with which the liturgy works, how then can it be other than the most powerful means of sanctification?

In his first *Motu proprio* Pius X declares that “active participation in the most holy Mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church

is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

Quoting Cardinal Pie, Cardinal Dubois sees in the liturgy "the solution of the social question." Cardinal Mercier thus speaks of it: "Religion will infuse its divine sap into our whole life and will effectually help us to carry out the Church's mission to society."

It would be easy to bring together quotations without number, coming from bishops, priests, religious, lay folk and even unbelievers, all witnessing to the importance of the liturgy in this twentieth century. No doubt a general movement is making itself felt to bring the entire city of God "back to the liturgy." For just as masterpieces of art defy the centuries because they express that underlying sense of the kinship of all men, which is independent of mere externals denoting the nationality or period of the character or event represented, so the liturgy, the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit, is as well fitted to the modern soul as to that of an earlier time. It is suitable for all to whatever race or clime they belong. It is the prayer of the Church, the one and universal prayer whose very comprehensiveness forbids us to remain in selfish isolation.

Like the evangelical dogmas revealed by Jesus Christ and the moral law of the decalogue given by God to Moses, the liturgical worship, flowing from and based on these, is always old yet ever new. To its rich treasure each century as it passes adds its contribution, for example, the feasts of the Sacred Heart and of St. Joseph, both comparatively recent, or those of our Lady of the

Rosary and our Lady of Lourdes, the outcome of providential manifestations of Mary in the history of the Church.

And if all countries and all ages have their special devotions, revealing the national temperament or the character of the period in which they took their rise, yet we can say that those only will last which shall have acquired the right of entrance into the liturgical calendar. Was it not for that very reason that our Lord told St. Margaret Mary to work for the admission of the feast of His Sacred Heart into the cycle?

Necessarily the same everywhere since it is the prayer of the great Christian family, the liturgy, far from combating modern devotions, strives on the contrary to ally them to that essentially modern devotion, the official worship of the Church. There is no question of suppressing but only of regulating these devotions by subordinating them to the official worship, and this in order to render to the most High, as is His due, the *maximum* of glory and to secure to men the greatest possible amount of those graces so needful to them. And thus without giving up these secondary sources of supernatural life,* it would be well to return to those primary sources which have nourished the piety of souls from the earliest ages of the Church. Following the lead of Pius X, liturgists see in such a return a most efficacious means of "restoring all things in Christ," their only ambition.

Let anyone desiring to be fully convinced of this

* Pius X speaks of *primary* sources; there must be therefore *secondary* sources.

read the pages of LITURGIA. They have been written to explain the principles—too often unknown or misunderstood—which must guide the liturgical apostolate. In them we have endeavoured to show in how many ways the liturgy is the “primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.” In the twenty chapters of this book will be set forth as many grounds for our belief, to which the reader is invited to give his earnest attention.

The first French edition was exhausted in a year ; a second one (5000 copies) was published in June, 1922. May this English edition meet with the like success that, as St. Benedict says, “God may be glorified in all things.”





“IF anyone deny that the world was made for the glory of God, let him be anathema,” says the Vatican Council. “That the creature should give glory to the Creator is the essential end of creation, for God has no need of aught but Himself and therefore could create only for Himself.”*

The most High is the Being which transcends all other beings. Infinite and uncreated, He has of necessity always existed and will exist for ever. On Him every being depends for its existence. If the life-giving stream which continually flows forth from God, as well into the natural as the supernatural world, should cease for one instant, at that instant all creatures would fall back into nothingness. And, as before the creation, no longer would anything exist save the holy Trinity, to whom “was glory in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end.”†

Since God has created beings endowed with intelligence and has raised them to the supernatural

* Fénelon, *Lettre iii, Sur la Religion*.

† *Gloria Patri*.

order, they are bound to recognise Him as their Creator and Father. To seek the glory of God is the first duty to which justice obliges creatures; to sing "glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost" the first command which love lays upon the children of the kingdom of heaven. And so it was the first petition that Jesus taught us to make to His Father: "Hallowed be Thy name . . . on earth as it is in heaven."

Isaias and St. John show us the angels and saints falling down before the most High and before the Lamb, singing day and night their unending *Holy, Holy, Holy* is the Lord God of hosts. To Him be honour and glory and power for ever and ever.* We on earth must join with the angels and saints in their celestial praise, for we, too, are God's creatures and children of our Father in heaven. "We pray thee, O Father almighty," says the priest in the Preface, "join our voices also to those of the angels, while we say with lowly praise: *Holy, holy, holy*. Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest."

That house on high—it ever rings
With praises of the King of kings;
For ever there, on harps divine,
They hymn th' eternal One and Trine;
We, here below, the strain prolong,
And faintly echo Sion's song.†

To assure the most High of His due glory and that fallen man might find a way of glorifying Him

* Isaias vi, 3; Apoc. iv, 8.

† Hymn at Lauds for the dedication of a church.

perfectly, the Son of God took flesh and dwelt among us. From the moment of His Incarnation in the bosom of the Virgin Mary, the sacred humanity of Jesus was anointed with the unction of divinity in virtue of its union with the Person of the Word. "This day have I begotten thee" does the Father declare to Him, and according to St. Paul* and the prophet David† He goes on to say, as a logical consequence: "Thou art a priest for ever."

Every Christian who is made a partaker in the Divine sonship of Jesus by the *grace* of baptism, shares also in the priesthood of Christ by the character conferred in this sacrament. The baptismal character is completed by that given in the sacrament of Confirmation. Those whom God calls to the priesthood receive a third character, given in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

These three characters, indelibly impressed on souls, begin and perfect their likeness to Jesus our Priest. The sacramental character is at once a reflection of and an emanation from the supreme priesthood of Christ. In Baptism and Confirmation it is a fitness for sharing in the Holy Sacrifice, for receiving the Sacraments, and for exercising other holy functions in the Church. In the Sacrament of Order it is an active principle giving power to confer the Sacraments. By these characters we are initiated more and more fully in the divine worship which has Jesus as its supreme Pontiff; that is why St. Peter could say of all Christians that they

* Heb. v, 5-6.

† Psalm cix, 4.

were a priestly race.* United to Jesus by grace, it shares His priesthood by means of the sacramental character: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a people whom God has purchased for himself, that you may declare his virtues."† As St. Isidore of Seville says so beautifully: "Since our Lord, the true King and eternal Priest, was anointed by God the Father with a mystical and heavenly unction, no longer is it given to priests and kings only, but the whole Church is consecrated with the holy Chrism, as a member of Him who is Priest and King for ever. And therefore do we receive the unction after Baptism, because we are a royal and priestly race and, as it were, other Christs, *ut Christi nomine censeamur.*"‡

Caught up, each in his own degree, into the priesthood of Christ, through Him each pays in corresponding measure the infinite adoration due to the most High. It is by the liturgy, her official worship, that the Church, whose members we are, continues the priesthood of Christ.

The Christian liturgy is "the public worship performed in the name of the Church by persons lawfully deputed to this end. It consists of acts instituted by the Church and offered only to God, the saints and the blessed." (Canon 1256.)

* "*Character sacramentalis specialiter est character Christi, cujus sacerdotio configurantur fideles secundum sacramentales characteres, qui nihil aliud sunt, quam quædam participationes sacerdotii Christi ab ipso Christo derivatæ.*" St. Thom., iii Pars, Q. lxxiii, art. 3.

† 1 Pet. ii, 9.

‡ *De eccles. off.*, Lib. ii, c. 26; P.L. lxxxiii, 823.

This worship was prefigured in the liturgical worship of the people of God, from which it borrowed several elements, as Psalms, Lessons, rites, etc. "The worship that Adam gave to God," writes Duvoisin, "that of Noah, of Moses, that in which we ourselves take part, all are merely different stages and successive developments of one and the same religion—that religion which was announced under the patriarchs, typified by the Mosaic law, and brought to perfection by Jesus Christ."*

Speaking of the Jewish and Christian religions, Perron says they are "one and the same tree, the roots of which are buried in God, the source of truth and life; the patriarchal religion, developing later into the ceremonial worship instituted by Moses may be looked upon as the stem, which branched out into the full vigour, fruitfulness and splendour of Christianity."†

The Cross of the Saviour cast its shadow over all the sacrifices of the Old Law, "upon the gifts of the just Abel, upon the sacrifice of the patriarch Abraham, and that which Melchisedech the high priest offered."‡ And it was Jesus who inaugurated Christian worship on Calvary: "*Per suam passionem*," says St. Thomas, "*Christus initiavit ritum christianæ religionis*."§

He who thus began the Christian liturgy continues to be its supreme Pontiff. The centre of

* *Autorité des livres de Moïse*, P. 3, ch. 2.

† *Introd. philosoph. à l'hist. de la religion*, l. 3, ch. 4.

‡ Canon of the Mass.

§ St. Thom. iii *Pars.*, Q. lxii, art. 5.

this worship is the Mass and there Jesus is the principal offerer, presenting to God, under the species of bread and wine, the bloody sacrifice consummated on Calvary. This He does to glorify His Father and to apply to souls the fruits of His Passion. The very words of our Lord are read in the Gospel; the Lord's prayer is sung. And when the sacraments are conferred it is again from Jesus that they derive their power; "*Petrus baptizat, Christus baptizat*," says St. Augustine. Always is it the worship of Christ, but now in the whole world at once and through all the ages, thanks to the ministry of the Church, invested for that end with the priesthood of the Man-God.*

This worship will attain its consummation in heaven where, even now, our Lord is "always living to make intercession for us," as says the Apostle, and His glorious wounds are ever pleading for us in the sight of God. It is true that He can no longer add to the sum of His merits, but He ceases not to present them to God on our behalf and we must never lose sight of this in liturgical worship, which is always offered in the name of Christ, the eternal Priest. "For that he continueth for ever, he hath an everlasting priesthood: whereby he is able also to save for ever them that come to God by him."†

* * * * *

The Church in heaven and on earth, in union

* "*Totus autem ritus christianæ religionis derivatur a sacerdotio Christi.*" St. Thom. iii Pars., Q. lxiii, art. 3.

† Heb. vii, 24.

with Jesus, offers to God by means of her liturgical worship a perfect homage of adoration. "Adoration," says Bossuet, "is the recognition of God's supreme sovereignty over us and of our absolute dependence on Him." And the worship of *latria*, which we render to the most High in the liturgy, recognises this twofold supremacy of God, as Father and Creator, and our twofold dependence on Him as His children and His creatures.

Our worship springs from this very source, namely, our knowledge of God's greatness. Bossuet tells us that "if we would adore rightly we must first know profoundly. Prayer is an act of the reason, for, says St. Thomas, it is the property of adoration to put the creature in its right order, that is to say, to subject it to God. Now it belongs to the reason to put things in order; the reason, therefore, is the principle of adoration, which, in consequence, should be guided by knowledge."*

Glory is defined as "*clara notitia cum laude*," praise resulting from knowledge. "God is a spirit: and they that adore him must adore him in spirit and in truth," said our Lord to the Samaritan woman.† It follows that divine worship is an expression of our FAITH, since it is the virtue of faith which enlightens our intellect and makes us understand better the greatness of God and our own littleness.

Here we see the reason why the Church gives such an important place to the Creeds or formulas of faith, for all true prayer is founded on dogma. Sixtus V declared that "the sacred rites and

* *Etats d'oraison.*

† John iv, 24.

ceremonies which the Church, taught by apostolic tradition, employs in the administration of sacraments, in the divine Offices, and in all which appertains to the worship of God or of the saints, are a powerful means of instruction for the Christian people in the true faith; by them souls may easily be led to meditate on sublime truths and thus will find their devotion enkindled.”* “The ceremonies used by the Church in her worship,” writes Cardinal Bona, “increase *faith* and instruct the ignorant.” And just because it is steeped in dogma does the Church’s prayer inculcate so strongly the spirit of adoration.

Our worship of God is also the expression of our HOPE. Knowing our weakness, we call upon the Almighty for help. “O God, come to my aid : O Lord, make haste to help me,” says the priest at the beginning of each Hour of the divine Office. In the Psalms and liturgical prayers are heard the accents of the creature confiding in the goodness of his sovereign Master and the cry of the child as it throws itself into its Father’s arms.

Prayer, says St. Thomas, is “that rational act by which we ask something from one who is above us.” And if God, as St. Augustine declares, “gives only to him who asks,” it is precisely that we may be forced to confess that He alone can do all things. Thus prayer plays an essential part in the actual economy of Providence. “We ought always to pray and not to faint,” said our Lord.† The Holy Scriptures and all the Fathers insist likewise on the absolute necessity for man of

* Bull *Immensa* (1588).

† Luke xviii, 1.

prayer to the most High. They do not hesitate to say that the rebel angels, and our first parents too, fell because they did not pray. St. Gregory says that "they who ask merit thereby to receive what God has from the beginning decreed to give them." "Predestination," writes St. Thomas in his turn, "makes the salvation of man depend on his own prayers or those of others . . . let the elect, then, give themselves to prayer." "That we should pray in all things and before all things" is St. Benedict's first recommendation in the Prologue of his Holy Rule. "In the first place, whatever good work thou dost begin, beg of Him with most earnest prayer to perfect." Before St. Benedict, St. Anthony, the celebrated monk of the Thebaid, had laid down as the first rule of life, "Above all pray without ceasing." And St. Alphonsus sums up the teaching of the Gospel and of tradition in this terse saying: "He who prays will be saved, he who prays not will be damned." "I believe," said Donoso Cortes, Spanish ambassador in Paris, "that those who pray do more for the world than those who fight, and if the world goes from bad to worse, it is because there are more battles than prayers. If we could penetrate into the secrets of God and of history, I am convinced that we should be struck with amazement on beholding the tremendous effect of prayer, even in quite ordinary matters." Is it not God who brings events to pass, usually, indeed, by means of secondary causes, but sometimes, if our confidence in Him is great enough, He goes so far as to modify the ordinary course of things, as we see in the lives of the

saints. "My Heart cannot resist the prayer of one who trusts in Me," said our Lord to St. Gertrude. Now the Liturgy is truly a prayer of confidence in God; hope permeates it all through.

Lastly and above all, our worship should be the expression of our LOVE. How could we not love a Being so infinitely lovable or fail to fulfil gladly the service He demands of us? "Prayer," writes Mgr. Gay, "is the fairest flower of the love of God." "To love God," says St. Augustine, "is to praise Him and praise is sincere only when it flows from love." By uniting the soul very closely to God prayer develops this love. As St. John Damascene says, "Prayer is the raising of the mind to God." The formulas of prayer which the liturgy provides, if recited with attention and devotion, powerfully contribute to strengthen this love and to secure this union.

"The Psalms," says Pius X, "have a wonderful power of instilling into souls the love of every virtue. St. Augustine writes in his Confessions: 'As sweet sounds of hymns and canticles flowed into my ears and Thy truth trickled into my heart, the tide of devotion swelled high within me.' (Bk. IX, ch. 6). For who can remain unmoved when he hears those sublime Psalms which celebrate the majesty of God, His omnipotence, justice, goodness, His ineffable mercy? There too, are songs of thanksgiving for blessings received, humble and trustful prayers for new favours as well as heartfelt prayers for pardon. Who can refrain from admiration as he listens to the psalmist recording the great gifts received from the divine

bounty, either by the people of Israel or by the whole human race; or again, when he sets before us the truths of heavenly wisdom? And lastly, whose heart does not burn with love for Him who is so faithfully prefigured by the prophet David, for Christ, whose voice St. Augustine heard in every Psalm, sometimes praising God, sometimes laying bare the inmost feelings of his soul, telling of joys hoped for or sorrows endured? ”*

In liturgical prayer every Christian virtue finds expression and all are merged in one hymn of adoration which rises up to God.

* * * * *

God must be adored, the Psalmist tells us, *secundum multitudinem magnitudinis ejus*, according to the multitude of His greatness. Who could ever attain to this? Therefore did the Apostles ask our Lord to teach them to pray: “Lord, teach us to pray.” And the Master taught them His own beautiful prayer, the *Pater*. The Church continues the work of Christ and so she, too, teaches us how we must pray. What St. Athanasius said of the Psalter may be applied to the liturgy: “if a man wishes to praise and give thanks and bless the Lord, he finds instruction in the Psalms.”†

The Church does sometimes approve of and use prayers composed by one or other of her children, but above all, she teaches us by her own official prayer. She draws up rules for every detail of public worship, as, for instance, the books to be

* Bull *Divino Afflatu* (1911).

† *Epist. ad Marcell. in interpret. Psalm.*

used, the formulas of prayer, objects of worship, chant, language, time and place. Her ceremonial is used in the court of the King of kings and to it the whole sacred hierarchy conforms when it comes into the presence of His Majesty.

This public prayer, necessarily one, holy, catholic, apostolic and Roman like the Church herself, centres in the EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE which Jesus desired His apostles to celebrate in memory of Him. Around this centre gravitate the CANONICAL HOURS ; during the course of the year the FEASTS OF THE LITURGICAL CYCLE follow in succession, each imparting its own special character to the Mass and divine Office ; lastly, the SACRAMENTS bring us spiritual help adapted to our needs in every phase of life.

By these official acts of worship, performed in the basilicas, cathedrals and churches of the entire world by members of the Catholic priesthood, that is to say, by the Pope, bishops and priests, together with the faithful, every generation of Christians, through all time and in every place, is united to the priesthood of Christ. Acting as one body through the hierarchy and therefore through the Church and through Christ, all offer to God the supreme duty of adoration, and conversely, by the same channel, all receive, normally, the benefits of redemption. "The rôle of the liturgy," writes Vigourel, "is to establish official relations between heaven and earth."* In the celebrated *Motu proprio* of Pius X (Nov. 11, 1903) occurs this sentence, that we shall often have occasion to repeat : "Public

* *La liturgie et la vie chrétienne*, p. 324.

worship is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit, and the faithful will be filled with this spirit only in proportion as they actively participate in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church." Let us weigh each word: "PRIMARY AND INDISPENSABLE SOURCE OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT," marking the limitation expressed in the sentence, "will be filled with this spirit only," followed by the explicit declaration, "in proportion as they actively participate," and this concluding phrase, "in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church." At first sight it seems strange that vocal prayer, made in public in a huge church with great pomp and ceremony and in the midst of a dense crowd, should hold such an important place in Christian life. Indeed, mental prayer, being less dependent on the senses and made in the quiet of one's chamber, according to our Lord's recommendation, would seem by its very nature more fitted to bring forth fruits of holiness. Yet the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Holy Communion, the Sacraments and the divine Office are the highest acts of the virtue of religion. The Church is a society composed of men and, since man consists of body and soul and is moreover a social being, therefore her worship must be exterior as well as interior and must be shared by all in common. But every society has need of a leader, and so this worship is carried out under the guidance of its appointed head. For all these reasons the public worship of the Church, that is to say, the liturgy (from

the Greek word *leitōn ergon*, public work), is to be preferred to private worship and is truly the primary and indispensable source of the Christian spirit.*

In thus preferring the altar to the *prie-dieu*, and the breviary to the book of meditations, we do not intend to deny the necessity of private prayer. In claiming the first place for the Mass and the breviary we do not imply that the practice of meditation is to be despised. Pope Pius X, who leaves nothing unsaid in praise of the liturgy, adds also this remark: "However venerable and august may be the various functions of the priesthood, it sometimes happens that through constant repetition they who perform them lose in some degree that feeling of reverence with which such functions should inspire them. . . . Nothing is so helpful as the practice of daily meditation to establish and maintain in the priest those dispositions of soul which befit his ministry."† We too should ponder on the import of these words, for if we do not bring to it the spirit of prayer, the liturgy is bereft of its soul. "When ye pray," said our Lord, "ye shall not be as the hypocrites that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber

* "If worship is paid in the name of the Church by one legitimately deputed to that end and by means of acts instituted by the Church and directed only to God, the saints and the blessed, it is called *public*; otherwise it is *private*." (Canon 1256.)

† Exhortation of his Holiness Pius X on the occasion of his sacerdotal jubilee.

and, having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret : and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.”*

This means to say that we shall profit by acts of public worship only if we perform them in a spirit of adoration and of interior prayer. For it is the heart that God regards above all, and thence, as we have seen, must spring all true prayer ; otherwise we, like the Jews, incur our Lord’s reproach : “ Hypocrites, well hath Isaias prophesied of you, saying : This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”† Did not our Lord also say : “ Leave thy offering before the altar and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift.”‡ It is clear, then, that however beautiful the Church’s prayer may be, unless it proceeds from the heart it becomes mere lip-service and ceases to be a source of life to the soul.

On the contrary, if, as St. Augustine says, “ we meditate in our hearts what we say with our lips,” or, as St. Benedict expresses it, “ our minds are in union with our voices,”§ then the voice of the Church, the Bride of Jesus, will be heard in heaven and we shall obtain more graces than we could by any other means. If we are eager to give to God the greatest possible glory and to obtain for ourselves a high degree of sanctity, let us love the public worship, and let us give it the first place in our lives, for the Christian should prefer to his own private prayer this prayer which unites him

* Matt. vi, 5-6.

† Matt. xv, 8.

‡ Matt. v, 24.

§ Holy Rule, ch. xix.

with his fellow-Christians and is truly Catholic. "Do not tell me," says St. John Chrysostom, "that you can pray as well in your own homes. You can pray there, it is true, but not with so much profit to your souls as when you pray to God together with all the faithful and in union with the clergy, whose duty it is to offer to God the prayers of the people."* And, we may add, you can never pray so efficaciously as in the temple consecrated for this purpose by the bishop, who asked of God that "those who call upon His holy name therein may be heard."

Truly the liturgy pays to God a homage of infinite adoration, as does the Church triumphant in heaven. "The divine psalmody of the Church, the Bride of Jesus, with which she consoles herself in this exile for the absence of her heavenly Bridegroom, ought to be without flaw or imperfection, for it is closely akin to that praise which is sung unendingly before the throne of God and of the Lamb."†

* *Hom. II, de Prophet. obscurit.*

† Bull of Urban VIII, *Divinam psalmodiam.*





LITURGICAL worship, being primarily a worship of *latria* or adoration, must of necessity have for its first object the Divinity itself.

Under the Old Law the patriarchs and the just adored God in the unity of His nature, but the Church, with Jesus her Spouse, honours God in the Trinity of Persons.

“The mystery of the blessed Trinity,” says Leo XIII, “was veiled in the Old Testament. To manifest it more clearly God Himself descended from the abode of the angels to dwell with men. ‘No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.’* That they may know and contemplate the blessed Trinity, itself the essence of the New Testament, the greatest of mysteries, and the source and foundation of all others, have the angels been created in heaven and men upon earth.”†

* John i, 18.

† Encyclical *Divinum illud munus*, May 9, 1897.

Christian worship has, then, for its object God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It brings us into intimate communication with each of these three Persons, for the Church is called to penetrate with Jesus Christ her Head into the bosom of this Divine family, that she may share its life. In heaven we shall contemplate the blessed Trinity face to face and our love of each of the three divine Persons will correspond to our vision. While yet on earth, the liturgy strives to initiate us into this contemplation by faith and into this union by charity.

In the Church's prayer the dogma of the Trinity is clearly revealed. Each Person is there shown to us in His distinctive character with the attributes appropriated to that character, enabling us to enter into special relations with each. The Father, for instance, Himself proceeding from no other, begets the Son, to whom He gives to be with Himself the principle from which proceeds the Holy Ghost. Thus He sums up in Himself the whole blessed Trinity, which derives its origin from Him. To emphasise this character of the Father, the liturgy always makes mention of Him in the first place and attributes to Him the quality of omnipotence. Following the order of the *Credo*, which is also that of the liturgical cycle, it is to "the Father, omnipotent, creator of heaven and earth," that the Church first pays her homage. In the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, that is to say, during Advent, it is to Him principally that she turns: "Send Him whom Thou wilt send."*

* Responsory for 3rd Lesson of 2nd Nocturn, 1st Sunday.

Father who sends to us His Son, for He it is who begets the Word.

Then she honours in Jesus the Word who became incarnate to save us. From Christmas to the Ascension she contemplates the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption. "Come, Lord, and tarry not," she prayed during Advent. Jesus comes, He dies to redeem us; He rises again and ascends to His Father in heaven.

Lastly the Church turns to the holy Spirit, sent by the Father and Son, for He proceeds from both by way of love. "Come, Holy Ghost," she says at Pentecost, "fill the hearts of Thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of Thy love."*

Yet we must not fall into the error of believing that she separates the Persons in her worship, for, although distinct, they possess one and the same nature. The liturgy sings: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." "Let us bless the Father, and the Son with the Holy Ghost."† And the *Credo* affirms that the Holy Ghost "is adored and glorified at the same time, *simul*, as the Father and the Son." "The Divinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is *one*; their glory is equal, their majesty co-eternal" (Athanasian Creed). "Praise to God the Father, glory to Christ our King and to the holy Spirit: equal honour to the three divine Persons, *tribus honor unus*" (*Ave Maris stella*).

* Alleluia of the Mass.

† Verse taken from the Canticle of the three children (Dan.) and sung after the *Te Deum*.

“To Him who begets (the Father) and to Him who is begotten (the Son) praise and jubilation; to Him who proceeds from both (the holy Spirit) *compar sit laudatio*, let the like praise be given” (*Tantum ergo*). Certainly the Church, in the prayer she addresses to the three divine Persons, bears in mind not only the distinction of the Persons but also the unity of their nature.

Rome has never consented to authorise a separate feast in honour of one divine Person. The Son and the Holy Ghost are honoured, it is true, on different occasions with solemn feasts, but only because of their *external* mission. “Our predecessor Innocent XII,” wrote Leo XIII, “though earnestly requested, absolutely refused to establish a special feast in honour of the Father. The mysteries of the Word Incarnate are indeed solemnly commemorated, but there is no feast which honours the divine nature of the Word exclusively. The solemnity of Pentecost was instituted in very early times, not to give honour to the Holy Ghost in Himself, but to commemorate His descent, that is to say, His exterior mission.”*

To such a degree is the blessed Trinity the supreme end of the Church’s official worship that everything leads up to it; in the general arrangement of the cycle the Saints come only in the second place.

The Mass, which is a sacrifice, that is, an act offered only to God, is offered to the three divine Persons: “*Suscipe Sancta Trinitas*,” “*Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas*.” The Church begins this, her most

* *Divinum illud munus*, May 9, 1897.

solemn act, by the sign of the cross made “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,” and ends it by blessing those present in the same way. The *Kyrie, Christe, Kyrie* are thrice repeated in honour of the same mystery. The *Gloria in excelsis* sings of God the Father, “*Deus Pater omnipotens*,” of Jesus Christ His Son, “*Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe*,” and of the Holy Ghost, “*cum sancto Spiritu*.” It seems superfluous to quote the *Credo*, the formula of belief in the blessed Trinity. The prayers of the Mass are addressed to “the Father who liveth and reigneth with the Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost.”

At the Offertory the bread and wine are offered to God the Father ; in pouring the wine and water into the chalice the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word is called to mind ; the Spirit whose office it is to make holy is entreated to descend upon the oblation.*

At the Canon of the Mass we give thanks to God the Father (Preface), we recall the mysteries of the life of Christ and, in some liturgies, the Holy Ghost is explicitly invoked.

“All the *Anaphoræ*,”† says Dom Cagin on this subject, “have the physiognomy of a symbol of

* At this place the Holy Ghost is expressly mentioned in some liturgies.

† The *Anaphora* (the action of elevating, of offering) is the sacrificial part of the Mass or the Mass properly so called. It corresponds to the *Canon* of our Mass. There are numerous types of Greek and Oriental *anaphoræ*, just as there are various Latin *Canons* (Gelasian, Ambrosian, Mozarabic, etc.). Ours is the Roman Canon.

faith in the blessed Trinity as well as being expressions of thanksgiving. In the same way the formula of Baptism is a confession of faith in the Trinity, as is also the doctrine of the Apostles, whatever we may think of the authenticity of the *Apostolicum* containing it. It would be true to say that the Thanksgiving (Preface), as far as the Consecration, is a commemoration of the magnificent works of God; the Consecration itself being only the commemoration of the Last Supper brought into the *Anaphora* in its historical sequence as occurring on Maundy Thursday, just as, immediately afterwards and that everywhere, there follows the commemoration of Good Friday or the Passion, of Holy Saturday or the descent into hell, of the Resurrection and of the Ascension. At the mention of the Ascension comes the sacerdotal *offerimus*,* coinciding with the entrance of Him who is a Priest for ever into the Holy of holies of the blessed Trinity, followed by the invocation of the Holy Ghost, or *Epiclesis*, coinciding in its turn with the historic moment of Pentecost and rightly receiving from this coincidence its theological signification at once splendidly mysterious

* After the Preface, the priest repeats the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, then He calls to mind His "blessed Passion, His rising up from hell and His glorious Ascension," and in this spirit he offers the consecrated bread and wine, "*Offerimus . . . Panem sanctum et Calicem salutis perpetuæ.*" Then comes the prayer *Supplices*, "that these things be borne to Thine altar in the sight of Thy divine majesty," and lastly the "*per Ipsum et cum Ipso et in Ipso*, through Jesus, with Jesus, and in Jesus is to Thee, God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory." (Canon of the Mass.)

and clearly defined. Finally the faithful approach to Communion in all these mysteries, as members of the Church, thus joining in her eternal doxology. This supernatural microcosm of the historical economy of the Incarnation and Redemption is developed exactly on the plan, also historical, of the Creed, passing from God, omnipotent and Creator, to the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Ascension, Pentecost, the Church and everlasting life. The apostolic *Anaphora* passes in the same way from Father to Son and Holy Ghost; and the Church, accomplishing in the mystical body of Christ what is wanting to His Passion, prepares by the operation of the Holy Ghost, as says so magnificently the *Anaphora V*, the communion of its members in the divine life, by associating them beforehand to the pure Act of the eternal Doxology in the unending Trinity—*per Ipsum, et cum Ipso, et in Ipso*.

“The last part of the Canon, therefore, covers the sphere of operation appropriated to the Holy Ghost, His work of sanctification, just as the part from the *Sanctus* to the *epiclesis* sets before us the Son accomplishing the work of Redemption, and as that from the *Eucharistia* to the *Sanctus* represents the sacrifice of praise rendered under the Old Law to God the Father, in recognition of His work of creation and preservation.”*

All the Psalms and Canticles end with the *Gloria Patri*, which is said standing and with an inclination of the body. “When the cantor intones the

* *Les origines de la messe* in *Revue pratique d'apologétique*, March 1, 1920, pp. 673 et seq.

Gloria Patri," says St. Benedict in speaking of Matins, "immediately all shall rise from their seats out of honour and reverence for the holy Trinity."*

The *Te Deum* glorifies the three divine Persons. "The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee, the Father of an infinite majesty, and it venerates Thy true and only Son, also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter."

The Hymns, which at the different seasons of the year proclaim the mysteries of the life of Christ and the wonders wrought in holy souls, always offer them to the glory of the blessed Trinity by means of the doxology, sung, like the *Gloria Patri*, during a profound inclination. On feasts of our blessed Lady, for instance, the Church says: "Glory to Thee, O Jesus, who art born of the Virgin, and to the Father and Holy Ghost eternally." On the feast of St. Martina (January 30): "O God, One and Three, who with Thy right hand dost strengthen the martyrs, give light to Thy servants." Thus does the liturgy always lead us to the blessed Trinity, not allowing us to turn away from it even while honouring the Saints.

When it is Jesus whom the Church wishes to honour, it is to the second Person of the holy Trinity that she addresses her worship of adoration. Whenever the priest at the altar utters these words, "And the Word was made flesh," at the *Credo*, for instance, and at the Last Gospel, he makes a genuflexion, for Jesus is God. And perhaps it is not altogether unnecessary to point out

* Holy Rule, ch. ix.

that our devotion to the Sacred Heart—during the month of June, for example—should always be ultimately directed to the Divine Person, keeping in mind the unity of Christ's nature with the Father and Holy Ghost; for the humanity of the Saviour is itself in adoration before the Divinity, from which it is separated by an infinite distance.

It is also because the humanity of Jesus is united to the Word that the Church falls in adoration before the blessed Sacrament.* And this worship of *latria* is paid not only to God the Son but to the other two Persons of the blessed Trinity also, for where the Word is, there are the Father and Holy Ghost, since all three have one same nature.

When we consider the piety of the twentieth century, we must acknowledge a falling-off in devotion to the blessed Trinity. The ever new developments of modern devotion ought indeed to be received and encouraged in proportion as the Church herself recommends them. At the same time it affords matter for surprise that no month has been set apart in honour of the Trinity and *novenas* or *triduum*s in its honour are rarely heard of.

Without awaiting such popular manifestations the Church has consecrated in a special way to the worship of the blessed Trinity the day set apart by God for Himself and dominating the whole week. To prove this we have only to

* "The worship of *latria* is to be paid to the blessed Trinity, to each of the three Persons, and to Christ our Lord even under the sacramental species." (Canon 1255.)

recall the Preface assigned to Sunday which sings of this deep and sublime mystery : “ O everlasting God, who with thine only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost art one God, one Lord ; not in the oneness of a single person, but in the Trinity of one substance. . . . So that in confessing the true and everlasting Godhead we shall adore distinction in persons, oneness in being, and equality in majesty ; which angels and archangels, the cherubim too and the seraphim do praise ; day by day they cease not to cry out, saying, as with one voice : Holy, holy, holy.”

Again, at the office of Prime on Sunday is said the creed of St. Athanasius which gives at length the doctrine of the Church on the mystery of the blessed Trinity. “ The Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity ; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is but one, the glory equal, and the majesty coeternal.” Again : “ There is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost ; but in all three, there is only one substance and one Godhead,” are the words of the priest at the baptism of adults.

Before the ninth century the votive Mass *De sancta Trinitate* was assigned to the first Sunday after Pentecost, thus filling up the vacancy occurring on that Sunday, for in earlier times ordinations were held during the preceding night. Such was

the origin of the feast of the blessed Trinity, when we adore, as the Invitatory says, "the true God, Unity in Trinity and Trinity in Unity."

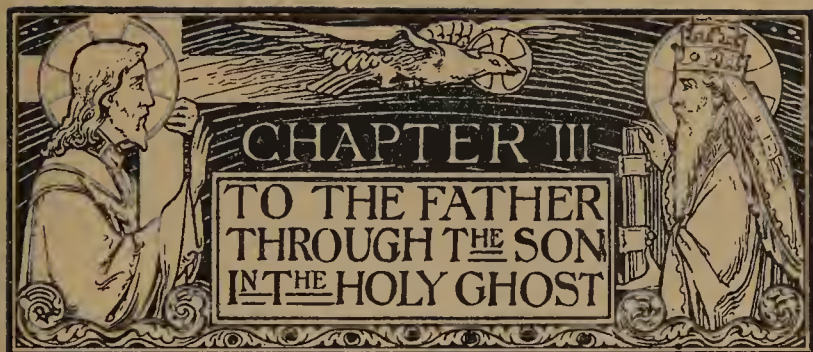
The Sunday is indeed set apart by the Church as the day on which she especially honours the three divine Persons. Let no one, then, upon a vague and false pretext of monotony, seek to bring back the *Ordo* as it was before 1913, when the Sundays were almost always sacrificed to the saints' feasts with which they coincided. On the contrary, let us hold to that rich and varied liturgy which gives glory to the blessed Trinity, and let us perform all our acts of piety in this same spirit, directing our intention towards the mystery of mysteries, the veritable "keystone" of the New Testament. Thus will the perfect Christian spirit flow from its true source, namely, the public worship of the Church.

A powerful means to this end, far more efficacious than is commonly thought, would be the adoption for the high altar, if placed at the crossing of the nave and transepts, of a simple table of stone or marble, sheltered beneath a beautiful ciborium (denoting dignity and power), adorned with its great crucifix and candlesticks but without retable or statue, as is done in the Roman basilicas. In this way it would be more clearly understood that worship was paid to God rather than to His saints.

But if a retable is erected, let it never be at the expense of the altar, the proportions and richness of which it ought rather to enhance. The images of saints used for its adornment may be considered

to represent the mystical body of Christ, Himself figured by the altar. So in apocalyptic vision the angels and saints were seen prostrate before the throne of God and singing their eternal *Sanctus* around the altar of the Lamb.





THE principal object of the liturgy is, as we have seen, to lead us to adore the blessed Trinity by establishing between our souls and the divine Persons relations which correspond to their respective properties.

We shall show how the official prayer of the Church realises this programme by teaching us to go, according to the formula of our Holy Books and of Tradition, “to the Father through the Son in the Holy Ghost.”

I.—TO THE FATHER

If we look at the Collects we shall find that they are usually addressed to the Father, attributing* to Him the wonders wrought by the Saints.

O God who didst vouchsafe to adorn the blessed Fidelis with the palm of martyrdom and with glorious miracles . . . (April 24).

O God who didst raise up blessed Mark the

* It is only an attribution, for every work of God *ad extra* is the work of all the three Persons.

evangelist to be a preacher of the Gospel . . . (April 25).

O God, the comforter of them that mourn and the salvation of such as hope in thee, who didst show mercy to the pious tears of the blessed Monica . . . (May 4).

This *Deus qui* is indeed the Father, for these prayers end thus: "Through Jesus Christ who, being God, liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost."

The prayers said by the priest in the Mass are for the most part addressed to the Father. According to the councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397), "prayers said at the altar ought always to be addressed to the Father." In the Roman Missal are found only twenty-seven prayers addressed to the Son, and these are almost all later than the thirteenth century.*

At the Offertory it is to the Father that the offerings are made: *Suscipe sancte Pater*; we give thanks to the Father in the Preface: *tibi semper et ubique gratias agere Domine sancte Pater omnipotens*; we give glory to Him at the little Elevation: *tibi, Deo Patri, omnis honor et gloria*; before the Communion we address to Him the *Pater noster*, and to Him also the thanksgiving of the Post-Communion.

"When you pray," said our Lord to His apostles, "you shall say: Our Father." And the Church obeys this command. By this we do not mean to

* Cf. *Questions liturgiques*, Louvain, 1913.

say that the Son and the holy Spirit are not also to be worshipped, but we simply affirm that the other two Persons proceed from the Father,* in such a way as that the blessed Trinity is, in a manner, wholly in the Father. Since the Father is the principle of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, to honour the Father is implicitly to honour them also.

II.—BY THE SON

The chief reason why the Church addresses herself to the Father is because we are so united to Jesus, Son of the Father, as to form with Him, according to the teaching of St. Paul, one great living body of which Christ is the head and Christians of all times and countries are the members. By the sacrament of Baptism we have contracted with our Lord a spiritual marriage of which holy Communion, says Bossuet, is the consummation: *Erunt duo in carne una*. At the Offertory of the Mass the Church asks for us that, as the little drop of water is mingled with the wine, we may be made fellow-sharers of His Divinity who did not disdain to share in our humanity. In consequence of this mystical marriage, the Father of Jesus Christ our Bridegroom becomes ours also, and with holy audacity, *audemus dicere*, we dare to say: "Our Father."

Through our intimate union with Jesus Christ

* The holy Spirit proceeds also from the Son, *Qui a Patre Filioque procedit*, as the Creed says, but this is because the Father, in begetting the Word, gave Him power to be the principle, together with Himself, from which the Holy Ghost proceeds.

we too are admitted as sons into the bosom of the divine family and become children of the Father. Christ is the way: *Ego sum via*. He is the door, *Ego sum ostium*, through which we must pass to go to the Father. "Through Christ as man," says St. Augustine, "we go to Christ as God." And this is what the liturgy endeavours to make us realise.

This official prayer is infinitely pleasing to the Father for, said as it is in union with our Lord Jesus Christ, it has an infinite value communicated to it by the Word.* That is why in the prayer *Aperi*, which is said before the Canonical Hours, we find these words: "O Lord, in union with that divine intention, with which Thou whilst on earth offered praise to God, I offer these Hours to thee."

The Man-God is the intermediary or indispensable mediator between men and God. That is why liturgical prayers addressed to God the Father invariably conclude as follows, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "It is through Him," as the Prefaces add, "that the angels praise thy majesty, the dominations worship it, the powers are in awe. *Te igitur*, wherefore, O most merciful Father, we thy suppliants do pray and beseech thee, through Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord, to receive these offerings . . . for by him, with him and in him is to thee, God the Father, all glory and honour" (Canon of the Mass).

* Acts belong to persons. When Jesus adores His Father, it is the second Person of the blessed Trinity who through His humanity adores the Father.

The Word incarnate, who, as He is man, leads us to the Father, as He is God, is the object of our worship. The ending of the prayers leaves no room for doubt in this matter: Through Jesus Christ our Lord . . . who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. But the Church desires that we should rather contemplate Jesus Christ as man, the supreme Pontiff who, as head of the mystical body, in the name of and together with all its members, adores God in the Person of the Father. And thus there is no danger of the faithful believing that there are two Persons in Christ, One who adores and One who is adored.

We must unite our prayer to that of our Lord and draw near to God whilst offering to Him the merits of this beloved Son in whom He is well pleased. For so the Master willed when He said: "Ask the Father in my name." Our failure to observe this precept may perhaps account for the frequent sterility of our prayers. If, for example, we, in union with the priest at Mass, were to offer to God the precious Blood of Jesus and then to receive Communion, would it not be to us as the kiss of the Father appeased by this offering?

The doctrine of Christ's mediation is always taught by the Church in her worship, and this is another reason for holding that the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

III.—IN THE HOLY GHOST

The Church's official prayer, penetrated as it is

with the dogma of the Incarnation, insists no less clearly on the external mission of the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier of souls. Proceeding from the Father and Son, He is the bond of love which unites them one to the other. He overshadows Mary and descends in the form of a dove upon our Lord to signify that the sacred humanity of Christ is united to the Divinity by His operation. Therefore the Church concludes her prayers as follows : “ through Jesus Christ who liveth and reigneth with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,” and at the end of the Canon she begs “ that by our Lord may all honour and glory be given to God the Father almighty in the unity of the Holy Ghost.”

This Holy Spirit, the envoy of the Father and the Son, descended upon the Church on the day of Pentecost and descends continually upon each one of our souls.

Around the Cenacle was heard the stirring of a mighty wind ; within, tongues of fire rested upon the disciples. Sent by the Father and the Son, His mission made itself known by exterior signs, and in commemoration of this event, as we have already said in the preceding chapter, the feast of Pentecost was instituted in honour of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord breathed on His apostles, saying to them : “ Receive the Holy Ghost.” When the priest baptizes he breathes three times upon the child and says : “ Go, thou wicked spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit.” The holy oil used in four of the sacraments recalls the dove bearing the

olive-branch and signifies the graces of the Holy Spirit which are poured into souls.*

Thus it is always by an external rite signifying the Holy Ghost alone that grace is given to us. And we find that such is the doctrine of the Greek Fathers, especially St. Cyril of Alexandria, who declares that the third Person of the blessed Trinity plays an important part in the sanctification of souls. The Holy Ghost takes possession of the soul, and it is through Him that the Father and the Son come and abide in us, for He has one

* At the blessing of the Holy Oils the Church sings: "In the beginning of all things God, among the other gifts of His goodness, made trees to spring out of the earth and with them the olive from which we obtain that unctuous liquid destined for the sacred chrism." "The properties of oil, by reason of which it symbolises the Holy Ghost," says St. Thomas, "are to be found in olive oil rather than in any other oil. In fact, the olive-tree itself, through being an evergreen, signifies the refreshing and merciful operation of the Holy Ghost." (iii, Q. lxxii, a. 2, ad. 3.) And the Church continues: "When the sins of the world had been washed away by the flood, a dove proclaimed that peace was restored to the earth, by the branch of olive that it brought, a symbol of the blessings that the future held in store." On Palm Sunday the Church again tells us that God "commanded a dove to proclaim peace to the earth by an olive branch." And she adds: "the branches of olive that the Jews strewed at the feet of Christ proclaim, in a manner, the coming of a spiritual unction." These branches are like that which the dove bore in its mouth when it returned to the ark; "they are a sign of peace and of the richness of mercy." The oil which is the matter of the sacraments of Confirmation and of Extreme Unction, and is also used in the administration of the sacrament of Holy Orders, admirably signifies the outpouring of the Holy Ghost into souls thus anointed. In iconography the Holy Spirit is sometimes represented in human form with brow encircled by a crown of olive, or under the form of a dove carrying in its mouth an olive branch or a phial of holy oil.

and the same nature as they and cannot be separated from them.

The Holy Spirit binds us to Jesus Christ. He is the mighty wind which impels us onward through Christ to God the Father. "We have access in one Spirit to the Father," says the apostle.* "You have received," he adds, "the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father)."[†] The liturgy, keeping in view the external mission of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, which she constantly affirms in her formulas and rites, teaches that the principle of our ascension towards God is the Holy Ghost, that Christ our Priest is the means whereby we ascend, whilst the Father, who sums up in Himself the whole blessed Trinity is the term of that ascension.

* Eph. ii, 18.

† Rom. viii, 15.





WE have to go to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. But how are we to make practical use of this mediation of our Lord, for our supreme Pontiff left this earth at His Ascension? And this Holy Spirit, sent to take His place, where shall we find Him?

To answer these questions we must evoke her whom the liturgy styles "our holy Mother the Church." The Bride of Christ, baptised in the Holy Spirit, she leads us her children even to God, the Father of Jesus Christ and her own Father. To enter into the Father's house, that is, the kingdom of heaven, we must go through the Church and through her alone.

The visible Church is first of all represented by the Pope. Before leaving this earth, our Lord invested Peter, the chief of the apostles, with the supreme Pontificate, and in Peter all the Popes his successors: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall

be loosed also in heaven.”* Again, when our Lord took leave of all His apostles, He said to them : “Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them ; and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained.”†

The power given to Peter is bestowed also upon all the apostles united to him as their head. “Placed immediately after the Roman Pontiff and under his direction,” writes Leo XIII, “the government of the whole Christian world in its religious affairs belongs to the bishops. Though not at the height of the pontifical power, they are nevertheless princes in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and as each of them is set over a particular church they are, says St. Thomas, as it were the head workmen in the building of the spiritual edifice.”‡

And so there exists on earth a visible hierarchy or sacred principality consisting of the Pope and all the bishops. This visible Church takes the place of Jesus Christ and wields His powers, and thus, so to speak, His Incarnation is extended to the entire world and throughout all ages. Moreover she possesses the mysterious power of bringing down the Word Incarnate upon her altars, and she it is who watches over all the tabernacles where He dwells. It is in virtue of these words : “Do this in memory of me,” so the Council of Trent tells us, that the apostles received the power to consecrate and were made priests, which fact shows how intimate is the union between the Eucharist and the hierarchy. The Church is another Christ

* Matt. xvi, 19.

† John xx, 22-23.

‡ *Sapientiæ christianæ*.

because she is inseparable from Him. Clothed with the very priesthood of the Saviour, she supplies by her ministry for all those actions which are not performed by our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. For He who is present in the consecrated host neither speaks nor moves, but the Church preaches and acts in His name. And therefore the ecclesiastical authority, always one with Christ, can say as He did: "No one cometh to the Father but by me."

We go to the Father through Christ and the Church and in the Spirit. The Apostle declares that the Holy Spirit has placed the bishops to rule the Church of God.* This Holy Spirit took possession of the Church on the day of Pentecost. He who descended upon Christ under the form of a dove, the symbol of love, descended, as we have seen, upon the bride of Christ, in the nuptial chamber of the Cenacle, under the form of tongues of fire, also a symbol of love. From that time He has never left the Church, and therefore the reign of the Catholic hierarchy coincides with the reign of the Holy Spirit. They are so absolutely indivisible that St. Peter exclaimed in the Council of Jerusalem: "It seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us . . ."

We said in the preceding chapter that the Church alludes to the action of the Holy Spirit in her formulas of prayer and in many of her rites. It will be well to enlarge on this point.

St. Paul speaks of the grace of the Holy Spirit that he gave to Timothy by the imposition of

* Acts xx, 28.

hands, and in the ceremony of the consecration of a bishop the three consecrating prelates simultaneously lay their hands upon him, saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost." The bishops, in their turn, communicate this Holy Spirit to their priests: "If anyone says that in holy ordination the Holy Spirit is not given, let him be anathema," says the Council of Trent. Extending his hand, as do all the priests present, the bishop says: "Pour into their hearts, O Lord, the spirit of holiness." Then during the singing of the *Veni Creator Spiritus* he anoints their hands with the *oil* of catechumens. And lastly he breathes on them, saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins you forgive, they shall be forgiven."

The bishop ordains deacons also by the imposition of hands, saying to each: "Receive the Holy Ghost, that you may be strong to resist the devil." To sub-deacons he says: "May the Holy Spirit fill them with His seven gifts."

When the bishop confirms, he begins by singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, after which he lays his hands over the candidates. He prays: "Send forth upon them thy sevenfold Spirit, the Holy Paraclete, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel and of fortitude, of knowledge and of godliness, the spirit of thy fear." He then anoints the candidates with holy chrism, saying to each: "I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation." He concludes with the following prayer: "O God, who didst give to thine apostles the Holy Spirit, and didst ordain that by them and their successors he should be delivered to the rest of the

faithful, grant to those whose foreheads we have anointed with the holy chrism, that the same Holy Spirit coming down upon them may by his gracious indwelling fashion their hearts to be a temple of his glory.”

In administering Extreme Unction the priest anoints the sick person and adds: “Cure, we beseech thee, O our Redeemer, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the ailments of this thy servant who is sick.”

The sacred hierarchy, which continues, as it were, the life of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth, possesses and bestows the Holy Ghost as did Christ Himself. The Church is filled with the Holy Ghost; to let oneself be guided by her is, as we have said, to go to the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Ghost.

But how, in practice, does the Church lead us to the Father?

To understand this we must recall how Jesus gave to His Church the power of teaching for the instruction of souls, of ministry for their sanctification, and of government for their direction. The Church exercises this three-fold power under the action of the Holy Ghost, and we shall endeavour to show that she does so most especially by the liturgy.

I.—THE TEACHING POWER OF THE CHURCH.

The Pope, seated on the Chair of St. Peter at Rome, is the teacher of the universal Church, and when he speaks *ex cathedra* he does so in the course

of a liturgical ceremony.* In the same way the bishop, seated in his episcopal chair (*cathedra*) is the teacher of his particular church, whence the name of cathedral is given to the church where this chair is placed.

During the first part of the Mass, lectors read the Lessons which are taken from the Old Testament, the sub-deacon reads the Epistle, so called because it is commonly taken from the Epistles of the New Testament, and lastly the deacon reads the Gospel. "He who presides," says St. Justin, "then addresses a homily to the people, instructing them on the passages just read and exhorting them to imitate the sublime examples set before them."† At the time of this Father of the Church the bishop alone presided, and if it happened that he was kept away by sickness or otherwise lawfully hindered, he delegated a priest to take his place in the ministry of preaching.

"From the time of the apostles," writes Dom Ursmer Berlière, "we find the word of God proclaimed during divine service, and so closely was the reading of Scripture bound up with the liturgy that Catholic tradition has never allowed it to be altogether omitted from liturgical services nor to be deposed from the place of honour so justly due to it."‡

In our own day the encyclical letters of Popes

* In 1854 Pius IX, after the Gospel of the solemn Papal Mass, defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and then continued the Mass.

† Apol. I, c. 67.

‡ *Revue Bénédictine*, March, 1890.

or the pastoral letters of bishops are read on Sundays or festivals during the Mass.

How substantial and abundant is this bread of doctrine that the Church distributes to us in the first part of the Mass. Every day there are extracts from the Old and New Testaments ; verses from the Psalms in the Introit, Gradual, Offertory and Communion ; passages from the Prophets or Apostles in the Epistle, all of which throw light on the word of Jesus in the Gospel. And the liturgical setting, whilst enhancing still further the beauty of this picture or of this mosaic, as we may call it, formed as it is of many parts composing one harmonious whole, adds to it even greater perfection by its own richness, which is truly worthy of the treasure it contains. What our Lord and Master taught concerning penance, for instance, is better understood when, as on Ash Wednesday, we listen to it in surroundings where everything bespeaks mourning and is expressive of the sorrow which the Church feels for our sins. How far more clearly we grasp the significance of Christ's Resurrection when, after the long and penitential season of Lent, the Gospel which tells of it is read and explained by ministers clothed in vestments indicative of joy, with the chant of the Alleluia so enthusiastically sung still ringing in our ears and in the midst of a multitude gathered together to share in this new life of the Saviour by their Easter Communion.

How eloquent is the teaching of the Church when she sets before us some saint as our model, giving us a summary of his life in the Office and

Mass. Thus does she expound to us both the theory and practice of Christian asceticism. In the course of the year how many feasts are celebrated, and consequently how many truths are impressed upon us, how many virtues held up for our imitation. In this way Christ is always before our eyes either in Himself or in His members. And the imitation of Christ is sanctity.

The Council of Trent goes so far as to say that in explaining to the faithful in the course of the year the Gospels of the Sundays, all the points of doctrine contained in the Catechism are gone through.* Bossuet did not hesitate to say that the prayers of the Church are the principal instrument of tradition.†

Liturgy, like theology, ought to be studied on one's knees. Every dogma is there asserted and is endowed with a subtle power of penetration, for through the liturgy the Church appeals not only to one faculty of man but to all at once. Take, for example, the feast of Christmas, which comes each year with its joyful chants and dazzling lights, with its magnificent Office and Mass, every word of which acclaims the Infant Jesus—could there be a more eloquent affirmation of the dogma

* See the Appendix of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, where will be found the plan of instructions for every Sunday of the year, adapted to the Gospel of each Sunday. It is impossible to rate too highly the importance of the homily or explanation of the Gospel of the day, at the parochial mass. The sermon will be all the more impressive for being set each Sunday in its proper liturgical framework.

† *Etats d'oraison*, ch. vi.

of the Incarnation? It is the same with the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, with the Assumption of our Lady and with all the mysteries. The whole doctrine of these great mysteries is to be found in the missal and breviary on the days appointed for their celebration.

From what has been said it is evident that the public worship of the Church is the *ordinary* way—the normal and safe way—in which the Church exercises her teaching power, for there she herself, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, displays before us the riches of Scripture and Tradition.

II.—THE POWER OF MINISTRATION

By means of the whole body of prayers, ceremonies and rites contained in the liturgical books, namely, the Missal, Breviary, Ritual, Pontifical, Ceremonial of bishops and the Martyrology, the Church exercises her power of ministration in all essentials. All the following chapters go to prove this. Here we will only point out in a general way how the Church sanctifies us by her liturgy.

(1) *Each day* the Catholic hierarchy, by celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, the centre of the Church's worship, and by reciting the Canonical Hours, obtains from God for all Christians the graces merited for them on Calvary.

(2) *Each year* the feasts of the liturgical cycle bring before us all the mysteries of our Lord's life, in order to apply the merits of that life to our souls.

(3) *During our whole life* the graces indispensable to salvation are given by the sacraments, which of themselves act efficaciously, and the sacramentals,

whose action depends on the devotion of those who confer and those who receive them.

A child is born : the Church through her priests bends like a mother over its cradle and gives it in Baptism the life of grace. Later she admits it to the banquet of the Holy Eucharist, where it shares more fully in the fruits of the Mass, which are indeed the same as those of Calvary. The child having attained the use of reason, its bishop confirms it. Has it the misfortune to offend God? The Church reconciles it to Him. When the time comes for a young man to choose a state of life it is the Church again who confers upon him the priesthood or blesses his religious profession or nuptial union.

And finally, when its last hour comes and the soul must go to God, the Church commends it to the most High by the holy unction and, clothed in mourning, she recites the Office and Mass of the Dead over the corpse, laying it afterwards in blessed ground.

All the sacramentals, as holy water, the *Confiteor*, the *Pater*, the reading of the Gospel, incense, the blessing of candles, ashes, palms and all other blessings given by the Church on various occasions, also co-operate most efficaciously in our sanctification, as will be seen later.

III.—THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT

The power of government is “ that royal diadem placed by the Father on the brow of His Christ, who therewith crowns His Church.”* This power, at

* Dom Gréa, *De l'Eglise*.

once legislative, judicial and coercive, is exercised in some degree by the liturgy.

Power over the liturgy or the right to regulate public and official worship belongs to the visible Head of the Church.* It is only since the Council of Trent that the Roman Pontiffs have reserved this right to themselves ; yet the liturgies of different churches and the general customs which by consent of the bishop were observed in religious worship became lawful only by the tacit agreement of the Pope. "The liturgical books which regulate our daily sacrifices, our adoration and prayers, derive all their power of praise, intercession and sanctification from the fact of their being given to us by the actual head of the hierarchy. Their transcendent and incomparable value in the eyes of the Father in heaven lies in this, that they contain the formulas of the great Prayer organised by the Vicar of Jesus Christ."† Breviary, missal, ritual, all have received their legal authenticity from his supreme authority, and therefore the prayers they contain are not merely approved formulas, they are the official prayer of the Bride of Christ and as such are endowed with a greater power of intercession. The Church makes these formulas her own ; they are full to overflowing with the merits of Christ, the invisible Head of the Church, and with those of the saints His members.

"Guardian of the *idea of duty*," writes Dom. M. Festugière, "the liturgy, because of its legislation

* *Unius Apostolicæ Sedis est tum sacram ordinare liturgiam, tum liturgicos approbare libros* (Can. 1257).

† D. Beauduin, *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 24.

concerning ritual, becomes a school where duties are taught. It is not our intention to analyse further this legislation which determines the annual cycle, which daily distributes the task of the official prayer over distinct liturgical acts, and, finally, by its 'rubrics,' regulates the carrying out of divine worship even in the least detail."*

Formerly it was customary for the Church to proclaim her judgments and ordinances when the people were assembled for the performance of some liturgical act; ecclesiastical legislation still retains this custom in the matter of the publication of the banns, which takes place after the Gospel at Mass.

In our days, too, Advent and Lent are prohibited times for the solemnisation of marriage, and Lent is a season of fasting and abstinence. In earlier days during these seasons the Church forbade war, closed law courts and suspended lawsuits. The observance of Vigils, Ember-days and Fridays is also a penitential exercise dependent on the liturgy. The Church often took occasion of liturgical functions to exercise her executive power. "The expulsion and reconciliation of penitents, acts which naturally belong to the coercive discipline of the Church, are in form ceremonial acts," says M. Desloge. Traces of this executive power as well as a real application of it may still be seen in the Easter confession and the penance imposed.

Lastly, excommunication excludes from the

* *Op. cit.*

Church and from communion with the faithful ; it even shuts the very doors of the churches.

The interdict, too, is an exercise of coercive power, depriving a whole country of public prayer, of the sacraments and of ecclesiastical burial.

The Church is indeed a Queen, and the liturgy forms part of the realm over which she exercises her sway. Never does she show herself other than just, and if she sometimes holds that severity is needful for the souls in her charge, she does not fail to join to it her all-powerful prayer in order to obtain their pardon from God. She acts like a mother who by the somewhat hard discipline of Lent, Advent or the Vigils prepares her children to enter more fully into the joys of Easter, Christmas and the other great feasts of the year.

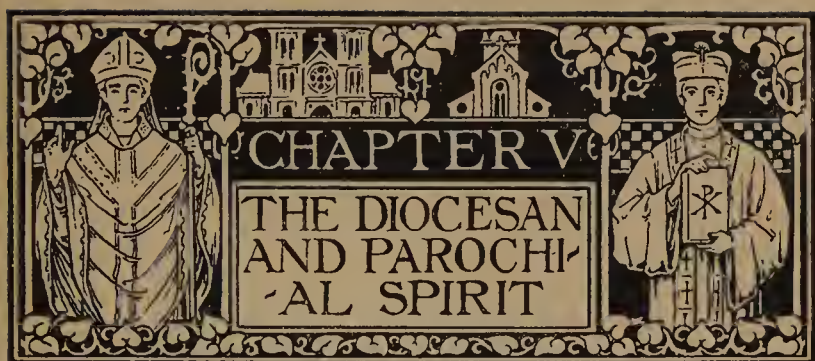
From all that has been said it is manifest that a soul desirous of acquiring the true Christian spirit at its primary and indispensable source must of necessity love the liturgy, for the Church exercises therein some part of her teaching power, the essential part of her ministration and in slight degree her disciplinary power.

Only the minimum of participation in liturgical life is imposed on all : notably the assistance at Mass on Sundays and festivals.

But he who desires to submit himself fully to the triple power of the Church, that through her he may go wholly to God, will consider it a duty to make use of the liturgy in every possible way.

It would be a mistake for one who seeks perfection to hold aloof in his daily life from the daily round of liturgical prayer. So to do would be to deprive oneself of many graces and also to rob God of the special glory He receives from the public prayer of the Church.





TO exercise her threefold power of teaching, of ministry and of government, the Church divides the Catholic world into dioceses and parishes.

We must remember that, in the full meaning of the word, the Church includes first of all the Pope, who has absolute and unique possession of the threefold power he received from Christ as Teacher, Priest and King. Next to the Pope come the Bishops who share this power with him, for the needs of all the faithful, and especially for those of their own dioceses. Then the Priests, who receive some of the powers of their bishops, as far as these latter judge to be necessary; finally, the Church includes the faithful who, under the jurisdiction of the Pope, of their bishops and parish priests, profess the same faith, receive from them the same sacraments and under them obey the same laws.

The basilica of St. Peter, where the Pope officiates solemnly, and that of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, are for the Christians of the whole world symbols of the summit of the

hierarchy, for they point out the visible centre of the Church.

The numerous cathedrals scattered throughout the world form as it were a crown around the basilica which is their mother and mistress. In them the bishops preside at liturgical functions.

Lastly, parish churches and other sanctuaries, where priests perform the duties of their office, are so many offshoots of the mother church of the diocese.

The duties of the Papal or episcopal chapter are in the first place liturgical. "The special duty of Canons," writes Dom Besse, "is to perform the Catholic liturgy in its integrity and with all due solemnity by the daily singing of Holy Mass and the Canonical Hours. On festival days the bishop increases the dignity of this diocesan liturgy by celebrating pontifically. This liturgical service is an integral part of diocesan life."

In early times the bishop was the only one in his diocese who celebrated Mass ; he alone preached there and administered baptism in the one baptistery built close to his church. At that time there were no parishes and the diocese itself bore the name of the episcopal parish.

"The faithful of the whole world," says Cardinal Mercier, "delight to go on pilgrimage to Rome. The faithful of a diocese, and especially those of the episcopal city, ought to do their best to make from time to time a pious pilgrimage to their Cathedral church. My dear people, there are plenty of opportunities for you to fulfil this practice of filial attachment towards your mother church.

“Is there in the diocese any church where the splendour of religious functions surpasses or equals those at which you may assist whenever you wish? Pontifical functions on all the great festivals of the year, solemn Vespers on Sundays, Pontifical ceremonies on Maundy Thursday, ordinations of priests—how many grand liturgical services which, alas, are still for many among you hidden treasures!

“I should bless divine Providence if this invitation should induce you to visit oftener your superb cathedral and to take greater delight in the liturgy celebrated there.

“Could you not henceforth so arrange that, on the various occasions mentioned above, each family should be represented at the cathedral services by one or more of its members? Could not the congregations, confraternities, conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, associations, working men’s clubs, sodalities, come in turn to take part in the offices at their mother church?

“Would not parish priests and religious communities look upon it as their duty as well as their delight to afford their bishop that realisation of spiritual fatherhood which they themselves experience each Sunday in the midst of their flocks?”

The concentration in the bishop of all the powers of this spiritual fatherhood is the reason why he alone is father in the true sense of the word and the cathedral is the real home of all the faithful of his diocese. If the cathedral church is the most beautiful and the largest of all the churches in the diocese, it is precisely because it contains the throne of one who possesses in himself, that he

may share it with his whole flock, the fulness of the priesthood.

All the religious life of the diocese centres in the bishop. "Through him the Church receives the gifts of God, makes her petitions to Him, sends up to heaven praise, blessing and thanksgiving. Herein lies the mystery of liturgical prayer, that public prayer which is the daily and increasing work of the Church. . . . And if the members of a diocese cannot always meet together in material union around the bishop's throne, yet the visible bond of ecclesiastical communion continues to unite them in the liturgical prayer in which, wherever they may be, they take part. Thus the great sacrifice of liturgical prayer is a perpetual sacrifice and this union of bishop and people in offering it is unbroken."* This is what we mean by the Catholic and diocesan spirit.

May I be allowed to insert here a magnificent passage of Cardinal Charost, at that time Bishop of Lille.†

"This country of ours, Flanders, is one in faith and in its strong and simple family traditions, thus giving us a deep and indivisible unity.

"But is it not evident that this fundamental and

* Dom Gréa, *op. cit.*

† Cardinal Alexis Charost was the first bishop of the diocese of Lille. During the war he showed admirable firmness and unequalled courage. Several times he has used his splendid eloquence to forward the cause of the Liturgy, especially at the "*Congrès général de musique sacrée*" held at Tourcoing in 1919. He was appointed Archbishop of Rennes in 1921 and created a Cardinal in 1922.

essential unity ought to pass into action and that unceasingly, and should be realised by some kind of exterior sign—by a Cathedral which should become on certain occasions the great parish church of all the faithful and of all the priests?

“In the Basilica of Notre Dame de la Treille, which all have the same title and the same right to look upon as their home, where all are welcomed lovingly and as it were personally by this holy Patroness of the diocese, we realise more vividly our spiritual unity as a family. There we shall bind more closely the ties necessarily relaxed by the division into parishes; we shall exercise that correlative life which, as physiologists tell us, is superimposed on the life of the cells and even on that of the members considered apart from each other. There we shall behold the imposing solidarity of that continual mutual prayer and affection, that greater and more intimate knowledge of each other which formed from the very beginning—St. Paul is our witness—the living and energising unity of the Body of the Church. In terms fitting one into the other like the joints of the body itself, the Apostle speaks in admiration of this society so fitly framed, with joints so firmly knit together, and the unceasing reciprocity of mutual good offices between all its members.”*

Of this unity as continually realised by the bishop and his throne, that is, the church of the bishop, no one had a stronger perception than the ancient Fathers, for example, St. Clement, Pope at the end of the first century, and a few years later

* Eph. iv, 16.

St. Ignatius of Antioch. "We are all," says St. Clement, "drawn together and in harmony by the sense of our unity."* "The priests assemble there in a body," adds St. Ignatius, "and like the strings of a lyre are attuned to their bishop." The cathedral, mother church and pattern of parish churches, is the place where the unity so much recommended by these two Fathers, in the pronunciation of the ecclesiastical language and the rendering of the accompanying chant, ought to be most strictly observed. There, the magnificence of the sacred functions, performed with the utmost care, should form the liturgical taste of those destined for the priesthood and should unveil to the adoring multitude the majesty of God, for these rites are, as it were, a true revelation of Him apparent to the senses. There also the close adherence to rule and tradition should give to the diocese the unity of public prayer, the complement of the unity of faith and baptism!

Finally, when, in surroundings which by their splendour enhance that of the function he is about to perform, the bishop holds ordinations, thus adding to the golden chain of the priesthood, the bond between the priesthood and the Pontiff who alone possesses it in its fulness and has power to impart it to others must receive new lustre. So that the families and friends of the ordinands, who have come from all parts of the diocese to the church where the bishop has his residence and his throne, behold the divine mission of the priesthood springing, as it were, from its source—that priest-

* *Prima Clementis*, xxxiv, 7.

hood that no power can intimidate, no human law subdue. It is there, under the hand of the bishop, successor of the apostles sent by Christ, Himself sent by God His Father, under that hand extended over the young deacons to invest them with the priesthood of Jesus Christ, that the sublime saying of Tertullian takes on its full force: *Ecclesia ab apostolis, apostoli a Christo, Christus a Deo!*

Our parochial churches, however sacred may have been their origin, however dear, and rightly so, to the devotion of the faithful, cannot give the same impression of divine origin and continuity. Assuredly their institution does not lack the sanction of legitimacy and they have come into existence by the best possible right, *optimo jure*, as the Council of Trent expresses it.* Nevertheless these churches, like the functions of a parish priest, are only an ecclesiastical institution. Not until several centuries of Christianity had elapsed did they make their appearance. When here and there around the cathedral church—the only parochial church of the city and of the community of the faithful—the first chapels of ease were gradually erected into parishes—a proceeding which continues at the present day—they were considered as merely offshoots of the cathedral church. This latter remained for all the mother church, the seat and source of that community sense, so strongly enforced by Pope St. Clement. The cathedral church can repeat to all parochial churches, though certainly in a more modest and quite limited degree, what Christ said to His apostles: “I am the vine, you are the

* Sessio xiv, cap. 9.

branches.” Let us allow the sap to flow freely so that all the branches may hold firmly to the vine in that unity and continuity which are the divinely appointed marks of the Church.*

* * * * *

For the greater part of the faithful, how can this union with the bishop, and through him with the Pope, be realised except by the intermediary of priests? The bishops, in fact, not being able to do all the work of their dioceses themselves, depute their priests to take their place among the people. Thus it comes to pass that, as the priest acts in the name and the place of his superior in the hierarchy, to gather round him in his church is to associate oneself definitely with the bishop.

God willingly listens to the prayers of the priest, and we should constantly seek to offer our prayers to Him in union with those of our priests. In every liturgical office this is done, for he who presides at it must be a priest (Canon 1256). And when, as at a solemn Mass, the ministers are many in number and perform their ceremonies with devotion, we may be sure that God is more inclined to grant what we ask by this multiplied intercession. When an ambassador presents a petition to a king with respectful bearing and surrounded by a numerous escort full of deference, is not more honour shown to the king than if the ambassador came unattended?

* * * * *

All priests are intermediaries, but the Church

* Pastoral Letter of Mgr. Charost : *Semaine religieuse du diocèse de Lille*, July 18, 1920.

specially deputed for that office those who have charge of parishes. The parish is an auxiliary to the cathedral and its rector a substitute for the bishop. The parish church is the centre of our spiritual life only because it is the daughter of the mother church.* And the parish priest is the bond which unites us to our bishop, for it is from him he holds his charge as pastor of our souls. He is the delegate who by the very fact of his commission becomes the official minister of religion in his parish. It belongs to him to preside at the offices of the Church and God receives our prayers more willingly when made through him. He indeed possesses, to the advantage of his parishioners, a particularly efficacious power of mediation, since he is the appointed intermediary between them and heaven. Thus, like the bishop, the chief pastor, he is bound on certain days to celebrate Mass for the flock committed to him. He must also feed it by his preaching. He is lawfully deputed to that office, and when he speaks from the pulpit he is the authentic mouthpiece of the Church. "The voice of the shepherd possesses a special grace and power for his flock," says Massillon; "he speaks with the authority and tenderness of a father; when he expounds the simplest truths, his words carry with them a benediction such as the words of others could never convey."

Therefore does the Council of Trent recommend that the faithful should attend their own parish church at least on Sundays and festivals if it can

* Dom Beauduin : *Questions liturgiques*, 1913, No. 1,⁵ Louvain.

be conveniently done, so important is it to listen to the exhortations of one's pastor.

Our Lord has made the tabernacle of the parish church His official abode. There, too, from the altar dedicated to her, Mary pours out upon the parishioners her maternal favours. There the saints who are most closely bound up with the parish have their altars, especially the patron saint in whose honour the church is built and whose protection is claimed by the congregation which frequents it. There, finally, after having given us in the course of our life, the different sacraments, the Church mourns over our mortal remains. On the stone flags that we tread underfoot, or on the tombstones which adorn the walls, are to be found the names of the dead members of this parochial family.

The following passage, written by a master-hand, admirably sums up these thoughts. Père Desurmont, in the tenth chapter of the first part of his work, *La Charité Sacerdotale*, thus writes : " Just as our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist has multiplied Himself, that each of us may possess Him for ourselves and that most intimately, so He has willed that the universal Church should be, as it were, particularised and that the faithful should have at hand a reproduction of the Catholic Church, namely, the parish. For the Christian people the parish is the place of divine providence, the centre of religion, and an object lesson in the due order of the hierarchy. . . . Providence has, we know, its privileged places where it acts in a special manner for the good of the elect. Among these

favoured spots the parish must be included, and in one sense it holds the first rank, since of all places where God is to be sought it is the most authorised, the most generally known, the most universal and accessible. In this abode of Providence, more than anywhere else, is the whole of religion practised ; Baptism, Confirmation, catechism, the tribunal of penance—more stable than elsewhere, the word of God in its most authentic form, marriage, the offices for the dead, the Paschal banquet, the perpetual and obligatory sacrifice and, finally, the most complete personification of Jesus Christ, that is, the pastor—all these make it the centre of religion. The parish also sets before us the true order of the hierarchy, for by its means every Christian is linked by his priest to the bishop, by the bishop to the Pope, and by the Pope to Jesus Christ.”

The parish priest is therefore instituted by the Church and chosen by Providence as the instrument through which the Pope, the chief head of the parish, and the bishop, the second in command, may be enabled effectually to fulfil their office in regard to the Christians for whom they are responsible.

The Church officially establishes the kingdom of Christ in the world by means of the parishes which cover the whole land with a closely woven network. Therefore the Council of Trent prescribes that the bishops, “in order to procure more surely the salvation of the souls entrusted to them, must divide the population into fixed and distinct parishes and appoint to each a parish priest ;

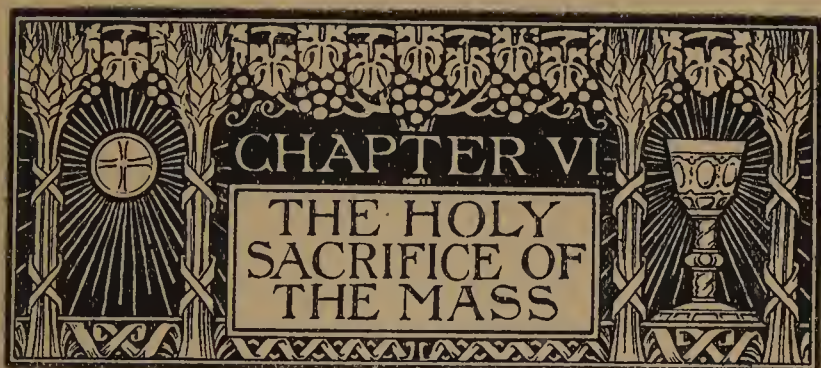
in towns and localities where this has not been done, parishes should be established as soon as possible."

It is important to make fresh efforts to renew our parochial spirit. Equally important is it to remember that the parish and the parish priest have been instituted above all for the performance of the Church's liturgical worship, for the liturgy is of the very essence of parochial life.

This life is especially manifested in the High Mass of each Sunday. When the whole congregation is gathered together for the solemn Mass—a reproduction in miniature of the Pontifical Mass at the cathedral—then there is a superabundance of spiritual life. Then more than at any other time does one feel in intimate contact with the official prayer of the mother church.

And thus by the mediation of our parish priest we are united to the priesthood of our bishop and to that of the Pope, who themselves share in the priesthood of Christ. Then God receives from us perfect glory and showers upon us His benefits. This is one of the reasons which make the liturgy the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





IN the whole universe," says Bossuet, "there is nothing greater than Jesus Christ; and in Jesus Christ there is nothing greater than His sacrifice"; and in His sacrifice there is nothing greater than the moment of His death, when the Saviour crying with a loud voice said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." When we remember that the Church is the continuation of Christ's life on earth, and the Mass is the continuation of Calvary, we can say, too, that in the whole world there is nothing greater than the Church; in the Church there is nothing greater than the Mass; and in the Mass there is nothing greater than transubstantiation. "Than this sacrament," exclaims St. Thomas, "can anything be more marvellous? Therein it comes to pass that bread and wine are bread and wine no more, but in their stead the Body and Blood of Christ; that is to say, Christ Himself is there, perfect God and perfect man, under the appearance of a little bread and wine."* (This sublime miracle, wrought daily on

* Fifth Lesson of Matins of Corpus Christi.

our altars, is the centre of the whole liturgy, for it is a sacrifice.) Now it is in sacrifice above all—since this is an offering reserved to God alone—that the spirit of adoration finds expression. Therefore it is especially by the Mass that the Church pays to the three divine Persons the worship of *latria* which is their due.

Among the humiliations accepted by our Lord the Eucharist must find a place, for it is the continuation of the abasement of the Incarnation and of Calvary. Jesus, says St. Bernard, humbled Himself for love of us, *usque ad carnem, usque ad crucem, usque ad panem*, even to the flesh, even to the cross, even to the bread. Is not the altar another Bethlehem or Calvary since there the Saviour offers to God the holocaust of Himself as once He did in the crib and on the cross?

Our Lord's constant preoccupation was the sacrifice He was to make of Himself on the Cross; the Bride of Christ following His example concentrates her thoughts on the altar. The altar is the centre towards which all the architectural lines of the church converge and around it the Church organises all her liturgy, so much so that it may be called "misso-centric."

"The Mass," says Abbot Cabrol, "has been the grain of mustard seed whence has sprung the whole of Catholic Liturgy."* "Christian liturgy," adds Dom Festugière, "has done its work in perfecting the celebration of the mystical immolation of the Mass and in developing itself around this centre; . . . this sacrifice is the principal act of the Church's

* Liturgical Prayer, ch. vi.

worship, absorbing and concentrating all her energies.”* “The sacrifice of the Mass,” M. Desloge tells us, “is the greatest act of Christian Liturgy, and the Church, divinely inspired as she is, can find no more excellent way of impressing on us the dignity of other rites than by including them in her celebration of the great mystery of the altar. Look through the pages of the Pontifical ; there you will see how the Church intends to honour, by bringing them into contact with the Mass, certain of the sacraments and other ceremonies most worthy of her veneration.”† “The Mass by itself once took in the whole liturgy,” writes Père Lafontaine ; “even to-day it dominates it, while every other part of the liturgy is in some way connected with it.” Formerly to celebrate the *liturgy* meant the same as to celebrate Mass.

“At the Last Supper,” the Council of Trent declares, “the night He was betrayed, that He might leave to His beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice by which the bloody sacrifice of the Cross might be represented, and the memory thereof kept up till the end of time : in order, moreover, that its saving efficacy might be applied to the remission of our daily sins, Jesus, declaring Himself a Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech, offered His Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine to God the Father and commanded His apostles and their successors to offer as He Himself had done.”‡

* *La liturgie Catholique.*

† *Etude sur la signification des choses liturgiques*, p. 50.

‡ *Sess. xxii, cap. 1-2.*

The sacrifice of the Mass, therefore, represents, recalls and applies the Sacrifice of the Cross.

“As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice,” says the apostle, “you shall show the death of the Lord.” “In this divine banquet,” sings the Church, “we call to mind the memory of His Passion,” *recolitur memoria passionis ejus*.

The Mass is indeed, according to the intention of Christ, who on the eve of His death substituted it for the Jewish Pasch,* the memorial of the “passage” of Jesus from this world to His Father. And that it might be a living memorial, Jesus took “into His venerable hands the bread and wine,” that for more than twelve hundred years the Jews had eaten and drunk with the paschal lamb in remembrance of their own “passage” from Egypt to the promised land. Then, by a twofold consecration, He changed the substance of the bread, a solid food, into that of His Body, and the substance of the wine, a liquid element, into that of His Blood. Why these *two successive consecrations*? Why these two different species and these two entirely distinct changes, if not that the Sacrifice of Calvary might be represented on the altar?

When the priest, obeying the Master’s command, repeats the sacramental words of the Last Supper, the words of the first consecration bring about the transubstantiation or change of the bread into the Body of Christ, but have power to do this alone

* The Offertory of Friday in Easter week shows that the rite of the paschal-lamb was instituted by Moses as a yearly reminder of the deliverance of Israel. Henceforth the immolation of the “Lamb of God” will recall the deliverance of the Christian people.

directly ; in the same way the words of the second consecration have as their direct effect only the transubstantiation of the wine into the Blood of Christ. The bread has therefore a special title to represent the Body of Christ, since its substance has been changed only into that of the Body of the Saviour, and the wine in like manner represents the Blood of Jesus, since its substance has been changed only into His Blood. The precious Blood and the soul are present under the species of bread, and the Body and soul under the species of wine by concomitance, because the risen Jesus can die no more and therefore His Body, His Blood and His Soul are inseparable. But strictly speaking, by conversion, His Body only is there under the appearance of bread and His Blood only under that of wine.

Therefore, although in reality our Lord Jesus Christ is wholly there under either species, yet He can say in all truth when breaking the consecrated bread : " This is my Body," and when offering them the chalice : " This is the chalice of my Blood."

After Him St. Paul will say : " The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? And the bread which we break is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord ? "

In all her rites and liturgical formulas the Church, too, is ever careful to speak of the Body of Jesus Christ when there is question of the bread and of His Blood when referring to the species of wine.

At the Offertory the priest offers the bread and wine separately. At the Consecration he both

consecrates and elevates them separately, and it is the Church's wish that we should first look upon this bread to assert our faith in its transubstantiation into the Body of Christ, and then upon the chalice to assert our faith in the transubstantiation of the wine into the Blood of the Saviour. The sight of first one and then the other makes us aware that it is actually the Holy Sacrifice at which we are assisting. During the Mass separate signs of the cross are made several times over the host which is called the Body, and then over the chalice as containing the Blood of Jesus. At the moment of the little elevation the host is united, so to speak, to the chalice apparently in order to offer the whole Christ to His Father. Finally the celebrant communicates under both species : " May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul," says the priest as he takes the sacred host ; " may the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul," he adds as he drinks the consecrated wine.

This double consecration makes the Mass a living representation of Calvary. We should understand in this sense the following passage from Bossuet : " In the consecration the Body and Blood are mystically separated because Jesus Christ said separately : This is my Body, this is my Blood ; this mystical separation represents most vividly and effectually the violent death He suffered. Thus the Son of God is brought down on the holy table in virtue of His own words, and clothed with signs which represent His death. Doubtless this action is of itself agreeable to God and constrains Him to look upon us more graciously because it sets before

His eyes His own Son bearing the signs of that death by which He has been appeased.”*

Does not this help us to understand that declaration of the Council of Trent that the Mass which “represents the bloody sacrifice accomplished on the Cross, applies to us its saving power for the remission of our daily sins.” It goes on to say that the Mass is truly “the same sacrifice as that which was offered on Calvary, for both priest and victim are the same.” For, as we read in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, “the bloody Victim (of Calvary) and the unbloody Victim (of the altar) are not two victims but one only.” Christ, “who offered Himself on the Cross, offers Himself now in a different manner by the ministry of His priests.” If Jesus Christ has finished the work of our redemption, nevertheless it has still to be applied to us, for God demands that the merits acquired by Christ on the Cross should be presented to Him on our behalf by Christ Himself.

In heaven, on the day of His Ascension, Christ entered on His heavenly priesthood which was never to cease, for “He always intercedes for us,” showing to His Father His glorious wounds.† “As the high priest entered into the Holy of holies with the blood of goats and of calves, so Christ entered into the eternal tabernacle with His own blood,” writes St. Paul.‡ “He has chosen,” says St. Ambrose in the lessons at Matins of Easter

* *Explic. de la doctrine catholique sur les matières de controverse.*
Vivès xii, p. 87.

† See p. 6.

‡ Heb. ix, 12-14.

Tuesday, "to retain in heaven the wounds He received for our sake, being unwilling to lose the marks thereof, so that He might show them to God the Father as the price of our freedom." "Behold Him," continues Bossuet, "as He draws nigh to His Father, showing Him those wounds still fresh, still bright and ruddy with the divine blood of the new covenant shed for the remission of our sins."* It is like an unbloody Calvary eternally lifted up in heaven.

On earth, it is at the Mass that Jesus offers His precious Blood to His Father. Both in the act of consecration and in the oblation which accompanies it (the rite of the little elevation before the *Pater*)† He is the principal agent. By His power transubstantiation takes place, and when the celebrant offers Him, it is He, Priest and Victim, who offers Himself, for priests exercise only a ministerial priesthood, a participation in that of Jesus. "Since in this divine Sacrifice," says the Council of Trent, "the same Christ who offered Himself in a bloody manner on the Cross is contained and immolated mystically, the Mass is truly a propitiatory sacrifice. That is why, according to apostolic tradition, it is offered not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions and all necessities of the living, but it is also offered for those who are dead in the Lord, whose sins have not yet been fully expiated."‡ Jesus in

* *Sermon sur l'Ascension.*

† Bossuet declares that "it is a sacrificial ceremony to elevate the victim in order to offer it to God. This is why the Body and Blood of our Lord are elevated at Mass, for they are truly our Victim."

‡ *Sessio. xxii, cap. I et 2.*

the Mass appeases God provoked by sin, because He presents to Him His Blood once shed on Calvary. The Sacrifice of the altar, being a propitiatory sacrifice, by its own power turns away the wrath of God and renders Him propitious to us. Therefore is the word Peace continually on the lips of the priest after the *Pater*.

Between the Sacrifice of Calvary and the Sacrifice of the altar there exists a mysterious union. In reality "by one oblation he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," as St. Paul says ;* but in practice another sacrifice is needed to apply to us what was merited for us on the Cross. "The sacrifice of the Cross," says M. de Condren, "merits everything but applies nothing, and the sacrifice of the Mass merits nothing but applies everything." And so the Council of Trent affirms that "since the fruits of the bloody sacrifice are most abundantly received by means of the unbloody sacrifice, the latter by no means derogates from the former," though some Protestants accuse us of this very thing.

The Mass indeed assures to the Sacrifice of Calvary its full efficacy ; it is the Cross put within reach of souls in every country and through all ages. As the Secret of the ninth Sunday after Pentecost tells us, "as often as the memory of this sacrifice is celebrated, the work of our redemption is wrought." And St. John Chrysostom adds that "the celebration of Mass avails as much as the death of Jesus on the Cross," in this sense that it applies to us the graces that Christ merited for us

* Heb. x, 14.

by His death. It is as if we ourselves were present at the foot of the Cross. Listen to what the Council of Trent says on this subject : “ God being appeased by the oblation of this sacrifice bestows the gift of grace and repentance, and pardons even grave sins.”* These sins are not pardoned directly as in the sacraments of Baptism or Penance, for the Mass acts in the same way as the sacrifice of the Cross, which offers to God full expiation of our sins and at the same time obtains for us an abundance of actual graces to lead us to perform meritorious acts, to repent of our sins and to confess them. And, if our souls are not in good dispositions, this sacrifice may even gain us the right to receive these graces in more favourable circumstances and especially at the hour of our death.

The Mass, being an expiatory sacrifice, has also a special power of remitting the penalty due to sins already pardoned. Like the sacrifice of the Cross, it remits them directly by offering to God the satisfactions of Christ. This explains why “ the souls of the faithful detained in Purgatory are helped . . . particularly by the saving sacrifice of the altar.”† Thus the Mass frees us from many punishments that we should otherwise have to endure on account of our sins, and shortens our Purgatory.

Lastly, the Mass possesses a great power of impetration, that is, it obtains help from God in every need of life. And so we find in the missal masses for the sick, for time of war, for peace, etc.,

* *Sessio. xxii, cap. 2.*

† *Conc. Trid., id. cap. 2, in fine.*

etc. Of how many blessings even in the purely material order the Mass is the source !

Let us set great store by the holy sacrifice and not imagine that it is inferior to the sacraments from the fact that it does not of itself remit sin or directly increase grace as they do. Its effects differ from those of the sacraments but are not at all inferior. The Church considers Mass so necessary that she commands us to assist at it every Sunday and festival, although she imposes on us the obligation of but one communion a year. And the glory that redounds to God from these Masses, as well as the profit to ourselves, is in proportion to the excellence of the dispositions in which we assist at them.

Pius VII was once asked to grant indulgences to those who were present at the holy Sacrifice, but he refused, saying that "the adorable Sacrament sufficed of itself to excite devotion since it contained treasures of grace so abundant and precious."

* * * * *

From all that has been said the obvious conclusion to be drawn is that our devotion must be directed to the holy Eucharist. In the first place to the sacrifice with the holy Communion which is its completion ; then to the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Is it not before the high altar that the magnificent ceremonies of a solemn Mass take place and that the Canonical Hours are sung ? Yet, according to the *Ceremoniale Episcoporum*,* the Blessed Sacrament may never be reserved on the high altar of cathedral or abbatial

* Lib. I, Cap. xii, 8.

churches during solemn Mass or Vespers. Moreover the Decrees of the S. Congregation of Rites, in spite of some existing customs, do not allow the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved at the high altar, either of cathedrals* or of any church where Divine office is sung in choir.† Finally, the Ceremonial directs that in no church whatever should the Blessed Sacrament be exposed on the altar where High Mass is being celebrated, save in quite exceptional cases (a rule always observed in Rome), because the holy Sacrifice itself ought to absorb the whole attention of those assisting at it.

This subordination of the tabernacle to the altar is clearly pointed out by the Church, for she decrees that every day, unless special permission be obtained to the contrary, Mass must be celebrated in the sanctuary where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. She forbids also those tabernacles made in the form of a tower which are isolated from the altar.

One may conceive of a church without a tabernacle, but never of a church without an altar, for the church is destined above all for the celebration of the holy Sacrifice, as is clearly shown by the ceremony of its dedication.

But if devotion to the Blessed Sacrament exposed in the monstrance or present in the tabernacle does not hold the first place, at the same time we have no intention of depreciating it. The Mass once

* Decr. S.R.C. 3335, ad. 1. (1875).

† Decr. 4071, ad. 3. (1901). Some religious congregations observe the contrary custom, presumably by privilege.

said, the tabernacle again claims its due honours, and the Church desires that the chapel where it is kept should be the richest of all. When heretics dared to deny that our Lord was present in the Blessed Sacrament, apart from the time of the holy Sacrifice, as they began to do in the thirteenth century, the Church regarded with favour the liturgical worship of the Eucharist as a Sacrament. The reserved Sacrament, reserved, that is, after the Sacrifice, was triumphantly carried in procession. It became the object of a special solemnity—that of *Corpus Christi*, of which Luther said that it was the most abominable of all the feasts kept in the Church of Rome. At the same time it must be remarked that the Mass is the centre of this feast.

When Mass ceased to be celebrated in the evening the practice of giving benediction with the Blessed Sacrament came into favour. In this rite the Host, apart from the Mass, is the object of worship. But it is interesting to observe that this ceremony was originally joined to Vespers or Compline. The name *Salut* usually given to this benediction in French-speaking countries recalls the custom of making this brief adoration while the *Salve Regina* (*Salut Reine*) was being sung at the conclusion of the office. Pius X says that “it would be well if solemn Vespers were followed by an appropriate sermon and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.”*

Just as Communion gains by being made during the Mass, of which it forms a part, as we shall see in the following chapter, so benediction of the

* *Motu proprio*, 1903.

Blessed Sacrament would gain by being united to the divine Office, which centres in the holy Sacrifice. It was not until comparatively recent times that benediction, like holy Communion, became a ceremony in itself, independent of the Office; and we are of opinion that it would be an advantage to re-unite them.

Therefore let us always keep the Mass in its place of honour and actively participate in it, so as to benefit by the fruits of salvation contained in this primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





HOLY Mass is not only a powerful means of sanctification as being the sacrifice of the new Law, but also because in it Jesus becomes the food of our souls. It was with this intention that, when instituting the Blessed Sacrament, He chose the species of bread and wine, saying to His Apostles: "Take and eat, this is my Body; . . . take and drink, this is the chalice of my Blood."

In ancient times participation in the sacrifice was by means of a repast during which the victims immolated on the altar were eaten; as St. Paul says, "Are not they, that eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?"* And we read in the Canon of the Mass that "to receive the Body and Blood of our Saviour is to participate in the altar." (*Supplices.*) In the Pontifical, at the time for holy Communion, there used to be the following rubric for the newly-confirmed: "Let them now participate in the Sacrifice."

Sacramental Communion is the supreme degree of participation in the holy Sacrifice. The faithful

* 1 Cor. x, 18.

are under the obligation of participating in it in this manner at least once a year during Lent or Paschal time, for at that time the day recurs on which the institution of the holy Eucharist is commemorated. But the Council of Trent desires the faithful to communicate sacramentally every time they are present at Mass, "in order to receive in greater measure the fruits of the most holy Sacrifice." *

The altar at the Last Supper was a table.† The Apostles ate and drank the bread and wine which Jesus, by consecration had just changed into His Body and Blood. In the first centuries of the Church the faithful always received holy Communion when present at Mass. "In the first centuries of the Church," writes Dom Cabrol, "this union of the faithful with the Pontiff in the same sacrifice was never lost sight of." We read in the Breviary on July 13th that "Pope Anacletus decreed that all should communicate after the consecration." Moreover, there is plenty of evidence to show that, in early times, through the fervour of the first Christians, the teaching of the Apostles and primitive custom, it would have been impossible to separate Communion from Mass.

* *Conc. Trid. Sessio, xxii, cap. 6.*

† In fact two kinds of altars are made: the altar-table, recalling that used at the Last Supper, and the altar-tomb, reminding us of the Catacombs, where Mass was celebrated over the tombs of the martyrs, and of the basilicas built over their relics. Besides, all altars, either in the shape of a tomb or even of a table, must be of stone at least in their central part, to remind us of the figurative altars of the Old Testament.

The priest is always obliged to communicate at the holy Sacrifice he offers, and if, after the consecration, he is unable to finish the Mass, another priest must consume the sacred species.

Fénélon remarks that “a kind of violence is done to the sacrifice of Christ when we unite ourselves with the priest in offering it without also uniting ourselves with him by receiving holy Communion. To assist at Mass without communicating is a kind of mutilated action.” Communion is an integral part of Mass; therefore, without it, the holy Sacrifice is neither integral nor perfect, but as it were mutilated.

Communion at Mass, though of divine institution and sanctioned by the tradition of the Church, is nevertheless not commanded by divine law, nor is it a precept of the Church. When it was no longer obligatory to receive Communion under both species, the custom, which soon became general, was introduced of giving the holy Eucharist to the faithful apart from the holy Sacrifice. The pyx, which at first was very small, being used only for the hosts reserved for the sick, became, from the middle of the fifteenth century, more and more important, as did also the tabernacles destined to enclose it. The faithful no longer brought at the Offertory the bread and wine to be used in the Sacrifice and to be received back again when consecrated.* Thus Communion easily became separated from the Mass.

* This custom, where it can be revived, is a powerful aid in uniting Communion to the holy Sacrifice and in showing to the faithful that these two actions form parts of one and the same rite.

In any case, whenever Communion is received apart from the Mass, it should never be forgotten that the Host is consecrated through a sacrifice in which we participate by Communion; and that consequently, as a general rule, Communion should be received during the holy Sacrifice. If we communicate apart from Mass, at least the two actions should be united in our minds. Thus the Ritual, though asserting that the priest, when giving Communion apart from Mass, may wear a white stole, yet prefers his using the colour of the vestments of the day. "The colour of the day is preferable," says Le Vavas seur, "for it shows the close union existing between Mass and Communion."* Although it is better to separate Communion from Mass than to omit it, still, whenever it is possible to receive Communion during Mass, the effects of both will be greater. The Mass is, in fact, the best preparation for Communion, just as Communion itself is the best way of participating in the Mass. Dom Vandeur remarks that "since holy Communion is a liturgical act of the first rank, it should not be merely an act of devotion, but above all its liturgical character should be preserved and its liturgical context kept in mind. Preparation, reception and thanksgiving should all be performed according to the liturgy."†

Holy Communion is part of the liturgy, and therefore it should not be separated from the ritual and prayers with which the Church accompanies it. These were composed under the direction

* *Cérémonial* (10 éd.), T. 1, p. 324, No. 3.

† *Rev. liturgique*, 1^{er} art., No. 10, Oct., 1911 (Maredsous).

of the Holy Spirit with the intention of preparing us for Communion; and the Pope, the bishops and all priests are appointed no other preparation. They communicate at the Mass they celebrate. Holy Church, in imposing on them the obligation of doing this, must certainly command what she considers best. Why then should the faithful separate themselves from their priests when preparing for holy Communion, and make their preparation a kind of private devotion? Would it not be better, especially at such a time, to unite ourselves with the sacred hierarchy, with the Church, and go to God through her? Let us have confidence in this good Mother, who, by her liturgy, prepares us so perfectly for receiving the Body of Christ. "O Lord, regard not my sins, but the faith of thy Church," is the prayer of the priest before Communion.

And the Church thinks she cannot do better than draw near to God with the chalice of the Blood of Christ in her hands. During the Canon of the Mass, she begins by offering to the Father the victim on the altar, the same as that on Calvary; and only after this oblation does she give us holy Communion in His name, having first begged the Father of Mercies to "give us our daily bread" and the charitable dispositions requisite for receiving it: "forgive us as we forgive."

Is it not better to receive the victim of Calvary after having thus offered it in expiation for our sins, as we do at Mass? The holy Sacrifice satisfies divine justice, and Communion, replaced in its liturgical setting, is a better representation of what

Cardinal Mercier calls the kiss of peace bestowed by the Father on His children, with His gifts, as a pledge of reconciliation. Moreover, by being present at Mass, we participate more fully in the effects of the Sacrifice and thus our reception of the Sacrament is rendered more fruitful. Here is the proof of it :

Acts of contrition occur frequently in the Mass under the most varied forms. These acts made by the priest, with which the faithful unite themselves, if they choose to attend, are sacramentals, which operate in virtue of the prayers and merits of the Church. Why not make use of these easy means of purifying our hearts ?

First, there is holy water : “ Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed ; thou shalt wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow.” Next, the *Confiteor*. The priest, bowing humbly at the foot of the altar, whither he dare not ascend, accuses himself aloud before God, the heavenly court and the whole congregation, of the sins he has committed in thought, word and deed. Three times he strikes his breast, as if to break his sins in pieces, saying : “ through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.” Then he implores the mercy of God and the prayers of the saints. Rising, he signs himself with the sign of the cross. He has obtained, and we with him, pardon, absolution and remission of his daily venial sins. Yet he does not ascend to the altar without begging God to “ take away from him all his iniquities, that he may have a pure mind.” He kisses the relics of the martyrs enclosed

in the altar, beseeching God “by their merits and those of all the saints to vouchsafe to forgive us all our sins.” This again is a sacramental, which purifies our souls if we unite ourselves with the priest. Then he asks for mercy, *Kyrie eleison*. In the *Gloria* he invokes our Lord Jesus Christ, saying, “Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.” These supplications, if said with devotion, obtain what they ask for.

The celebrant, when kissing the Gospels, says : “By the words of the Gospel may our sins be blotted out.” At the Offertory he offers the Host to God, saying : “For my innumerable sins, offences and negligences and for all here present.” Then bowing down he says : “In the spirit of humility and with a contrite heart, let us be received by thee, O Lord.” The *Lavabo* is also a sacramental, which, if we unite ourselves to it, cleanses our souls while the water flows over the priest’s hands : “I will wash my hands among the innocent ; Lord, redeem me and have mercy upon me.” After the elevation the priest strikes his breast and declares himself a sinner : *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*. In the *Pater* he begs and obtains the pardon of his venial sins. *Remissio peccatorum in oratione dominica et quotidiana*, says St. Augustine. In the *Agnus Dei*, he begs the Lamb, who washes away our sins in His Blood, to have mercy on us, adding : “Deliver me, O Lord, by this Thy most sacred Body and Blood, from all my iniquities.” “May this Communion, which I unworthy presume to receive, be to me a remedy.” “Lord Jesus Christ, regard not

my sins." And, like the centurion, again striking his breast, he thrice declares himself unworthy to receive our Lord, saying: *Domine, non sum dignus* . . . "say but the word and my soul shall be healed."

Acts of Faith are no less numerous. They begin especially by the reading of the Collects, Epistles and Gospel. "Let the *Credo* resound," says the Council of Toledo (589); "for by this chant the true faith is clearly confessed and the soul of a Catholic people, reviving its faith, is prepared to receive the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ." The Consecration is above all the *mysterium fidei*. Everything in the Mass nourishes faith and makes us realise the greatness of the God we are about to receive.

Acts of hope and love are also to be found in great number in the Mass. All our hope is in Jesus; "through Him and with Him and in Him all honour and glory are given to God." Trusting in Him as her Mediator, the soul immolates herself with Him and her love is enkindled at the memory of "the greatest proof of love" He gave by dying for us, a love which is consummated in Communion, when He gives Himself to our souls.

Thus everything in the Mass relates to our union with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. And since the effects produced in our souls by the holy Sacrifice and Communion vary according to the mysteries and festivals celebrated—for to communicate is to receive Jesus in the mystery which is being commemorated—it is easy to see the advantages of preparation according to the liturgy.

For the graces of Christmas are not the same as those of Easter, nor do we ask for and receive the same graces on the feast of a martyr as on that of a virgin. By reading the Communion Antiphons and the Post-communion prayers, we shall understand the manifold graces bestowed upon us by Communion thus placed in its right setting. To receive them with fruit, a fitting preparation is necessary. Therefore let us not be afraid of giving up the usual acts before Communion, often monotonous and said by routine; and instead, let us attentively and devoutly meditate on the Mass for the day.

The sacrifice of the Mass, as we said in the preceding chapter, represents that of Calvary. This becomes still clearer when the holy Eucharist is considered as a Sacrament, wherein Jesus exists under the species of bread and wine which are man's ordinary food. Consequently, in this state He is a victim whose flesh and blood are consumed. Thus the idea of sacrifice, of holocaust, of immolation is emphasised.

To partake of this victim is therefore to receive Jesus crucified and to be united to Him at the moment of His death. He died for us, in our stead, and when we communicate we seek to ascend Calvary, there to nail ourselves to His Cross and die with Him. Jesus has ceased to suffer, and now it is for us to associate ourselves with His sufferings if we would receive the graces they have obtained for us. This is the meaning of Christian Communion, and therefore it can only gain by being united to the Sacrament of which it is the

completion. Abbé Plateau declares: "We too often forget that Communion, at least spiritual, is an integral part of participation in the holy Sacrifice."* And Bossuet writes: "When the Church offers bread and wine in order to change them into the Body and Blood of Christ and then renews the offering after the consecration, she does this only in order to make a third oblation in which she offers herself." "The sacrifice which is offered exteriorly," says St. Thomas, "is the sign of the spiritual sacrifice by which the soul offers herself to God."†

Jesus was the bloody Victim of the sacrifice of the Cross, and we, in a manner, are the bloody victims of the altar, whither we bring every day, or at least every Sunday, the moral and physical sufferings with which we are weighed down in the course of the day or of the whole week. We obtain the strength to bear them from our union with the Victim of Calvary and of the altar.

We read in the Roman Pontifical: "On this altar let pride be immolated, let anger be suffocated, let all luxury and covetousness be put to death." "Understand what you do," adds the Pontiff at the Ordination of priests, "and when you celebrate the death of our Lord, put to death within yourselves all your concupiscences." "Grant that we may be ourselves victims worthy to be offered to Thee for ever," is the substance of many Secrets and Post-communions in the Missal. In one of the prayers of the Mass of St. Alphonsus we read:

* *La Paroisse*, T. iv, p. 165.

† *Summa*, II-II, Q. 85.

“Thou didst suffer blessed Alphonsus to celebrate these mysteries, and by their means to offer himself up as a holy victim unto thee.”

This doctrine is clearly taught in all the writings of St. Augustine. When reminding the people that there are relics of saints in the altar, he says that they have thus the honour of being united with the sacrifice of Christ. “We have not erected an altar to Stephen, but with his remains, with the relics of his body which was sacrificed for God’s sake, we have raised an altar to the Lord.” And he adds: “Sacrifice is not offered to the saints, because they themselves are the sacrifice.”* “The whole redeemed city, that is to say, the congregation or community of the saints and of the faithful, is offered to God as our sacrifice through the great High Priest, who offered Himself to God in His Passion for us.”† “The Church, being His body, in the daily sacrifice she offers, learns to offer herself through Him.”‡

St. Paul had written: “The Church is the Body of Christ, and the fulness of Him.”§ In holy Communion we are the drop of water the priest poured into the wine at the Offertory. We are one with Jesus and the crucified members of a Head crowned with thorns. And as the sacrifice of Christ derived its merit from the fact that it was accepted voluntarily, we share in it in proportion as we accept with resignation, and even with joy, our own immolation. This is the effect

* *De civ. Dei.*, l. xxii, c. 10.

† *Id.*, l. x, c. 6.

‡ *Id.*, l. x, c. 20.

§ *Eph.* i, 23.

of Communion, and this it is which gives its full meaning to Communion when received as Viaticum.

Dom Cabrol remarks that "the Communion of the sick is closely connected with the sacrifice of the Mass and does not really form a separate ceremony,"* and so we may say that it is received in the same way as at Mass.

Grimal remarks that "to desire to gain the graces of the Sacrifice in holy Communion without sacrificing ourselves, to wish to be transformed by the Victim and not to immolate ourselves with it, is to aspire to live as parasites of the altar and to seek salvation apart from the Cross." Communion is therefore an act of self-oblation, and for this reason it is the primary source of the true Christian spirit, which, on its negative side, consists in self-renunciation and in the mortification of the old man. This Communion, since it is a real participation in the sacrificial act, that is, the Consecration, is a perfect homage of adoration of God, for thereby we offer the holocaust of ourselves united with that of Jesus on the Cross.† Thus the Communion of each day is our daily Pasch or passage, under the leadership of the true Moses, from the land of Egypt, that is, from the captivity of the devil and our evil inclinations to the promised land, or the liberty of the children of the kingdom of God.

* Liturgical Prayer, chap. xxx, p. 271.

† It is much to be desired that in the addresses at First Communions, this view of Communion should be made more clear to the children, by explaining to them that for the first time they are about to participate in the Sacrifice of the Cross in the most perfect and complete manner.

To pass thus from death to life, ever more and more, is the meaning of the holy Eucharist considered in its life-giving effect. The Blessed Sacrament is, in fact, the primary and indispensable source of the Christian spirit, especially on its positive side. The effect proper to the Sacrament is to increase in us sanctifying grace. For it is a divine food which ought to nourish within us the life of the new man, supernatural life: "*Ego sum panis vitæ*—Except you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you shall not have life in you."* In fact, just as the food we take contains the nutritious substances we assimilate to maintain our life, so the heavenly Bread we receive contains the divine life and gives it to our souls. But in the former case the food is changed into our substance, not we into it, while in the holy Eucharist, on the contrary, Jesus raises us to the participation of His divine life. And Pope Innocent III writes: "Ordinarily food is changed into the substance of him who eats it, but in this case it is the food which operates and transmutes him who eats it into itself."† Food dies in itself, so to speak, that I may live by it. And so, in proportion as we die to ourselves, the life of Jesus penetrates us, as He said: "*ipse vivet propter me.*" Again, St. Bernard exclaims: "Christ feeds upon me, I am swallowed and digested, finally I am made one with Him when I am conformed unto His likeness. He both feeds on us and is our food; for if I feed upon Him, but He not upon me, it will appear that, though

* St. John vi, 54.

† *De sacr. alt. myst.*, lib. iv, P.L. ccxvii, 866. Migne.

I am in Him, yet He is not also in me. But if He both feeds upon me and I upon Him, then I shall be in Him and He in me.”* Bossuet declares : “ Thus you will be joined one to the other and you will be two in one flesh, which is the right of the Spouse and the perfect completion of these chaste and divine nuptials.”† And St. Thomas asserts : “ The unity of the mystical Body of Christ is produced by the sacramental reception of His true Body.”

The Eucharist as a Sacrament, *Sacramentum*, has no other end but to signify‡ and produce the *rem sacramenti*, which is the unity of the Church, by the aggregation of all the faithful into the mystical Body of Christ.

We are not speaking only of the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle, nor of the brief physical presence within us of the sacred species after holy Communion, but rather of the mysterious effect which results from this, namely, the abiding of Christ in our souls and of our souls in Christ. He is our Head, we are His members, and this life-giving union, begun at Baptism, because it contains implicitly the *votum* or desire,§ as well as the right, of receiving the Eucharist, becomes closer and stronger in each fresh Communion.

* *In Cant. Serm.* 71, P.L. clxxxiii, 1123. Migne.

† *Médit. sur l'Evang.*, ch. 24.

‡ Bread is made from many grains ; wine is pressed from many clusters of grapes ; and thus do they declare that we, though many, are most closely bound together by the bond of this divine mystery and made, as it were, one. *Cat. Conc. Trid.*, Q. xviii.

§ See the following chapter.

Here we find an explanation of the ceremony of the *Pax*, which the first Christians never failed to perform before Communion; for if the holy Eucharist produces charity, it also requires this virtue as a condition of its reception. St. Paul writes: "The bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread."* Communion has a very clear social aim; and thus it is fitting that we should assert this by preferring, at least on certain occasions, to receive it all assembled together.

In the Collect of the Feast of Corpus Christi we read: "Grant us so to venerate the sacred mysteries of thy body and blood, that we may evermore feel within us the fruit of thy redemption." As Jesus said at the Last Supper, this fruit is that we should realise in Him the Communion of saints, "*ut unum sint*," and should participate all together in the mysteries of His life.

How beautiful is the sight of all Christians throughout the world receiving the holy Eucharist in order to participate in all the mysteries of our Lord's life commemorated by the Church in her liturgical cycle.

We will conclude this chapter by remarking that Jesus is substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament, not only to be adored, but, above all, to adore the Father, to satisfy His justice by the daily renewed offering of the Sacrifice of Calvary at Mass, and, by inviting us to receive this sacred

* 1 Cor. x, 15.

victim, to make us members evermore intimately incorporated in His mystical Body.

In this way the liturgy, by organising our worship of the holy Eucharist, brings about the extension of the kingdom of God, not only by an exterior worship of the Blessed Sacrament, continually increasing in splendour, but above all by more perfect participation in the holy Sacrifice and by a growing development of the mystical Body of Christ through holy Communion. 'This is the full realisation of *Adveniat regnum tuum.*'"





CHAPTER VIII

THE SACRAMENTS

BESIDES the Eucharist our Lord instituted six other sacraments which correspond to and supernaturalise the different phases or states of life.

Into the soul of the newly-born infant Baptism infuses the life of grace which makes it a child of God; Confirmation gives to the youth a divine power of development; on the full-grown man the sacrament of Matrimony confers the graces necessary for the government and guidance of a Christian family. The Church needs to have a well-organised ruling body, and on the souls of those whom God calls to direct the faithful the sacrament of Holy Orders impresses a character which gives them a place in the Catholic hierarchy. Just as the body is restored to health by means of remedies, in the same way and better still the sacrament of Penance heals and even raises to life souls in whom the supernatural life is weakened or actually extinct. To those, finally, who are in danger of death from sickness or old age, Extreme Unction brings resignation, courage, peace and

even health, if their eternal salvation would benefit thereby. Thus are Christians fortified in the course of their lives with every spiritual help they could desire.

The six sacraments mentioned above are connected with the sacrifice of Calvary and also with the Eucharist, considered both as a sacrifice and sacrament.

Baptism is linked with Calvary, for "we are buried together with him by baptism into death," says St. Paul, "that, as Christ is risen from the dead . . . so we also may walk in newness of life."* In the water which came forth from the side of Jesus as He hung on the Cross the holy Fathers recognise a symbol of Baptism.

This sacrament is also united to the holy Eucharist because it imprints a character on the soul which gives the baptised the right to participate in the holy Sacrifice and to receive holy Communion. The water used in Baptism is solemnly blessed before the Mass of Holy Saturday. Oil blessed at the Mass of Maundy Thursday is poured into the water of the font. Formerly the catechumens were baptised immediately before the Paschal Mass, and even now this is done as far as possible. Grace is given in Baptism, so theologians tell us, only with a view to the Eucharist: *nisi respiciendo ad Eucharistiam*.† We have seen in the preceding chapter that Baptism makes us members of Christ and therefore children of God because it

* Rom. vi, 4.

† Clemens Marc. *Instit. Mor. Alphons.*, n. 1563, t. II, p. 110.

implies the *votum Eucharistiæ*, that is, the desire to receive the Eucharist.*

By Confirmation a new character is imprinted on our souls and the graces which flow from Calvary descend upon us more abundantly in order to complete the graces received in Baptism. This sacrament, too, is connected with the Eucharist, for the sacred Host is the food of the strong, of those whom Confirmation has made strong and manly; moreover, the holy oil which forms the matter of this sacrament is blessed at the Mass of Maundy Thursday.

Penance washes our souls in the blood of the Lamb shed on Calvary. It effaces all sins, however many and grave they may be. This sacrament points to the Eucharist, for it prepares sinners to assist with profit at the holy Sacrifice and makes them worthy to communicate. Like Baptism, the sacrament of Penance gives grace, so theologians teach, only with a view to the Eucharist.†

As to Extreme Unction, it has been shown in the preceding chapter, when speaking of Communion as Viaticum, how it unites the sick person to our Lord dying on the Cross, and how, by means of the holy Sacrifice and Sacrament, it pours over his soul the graces there merited for him. The oil of the sick, the matter of this sacrament, is blessed during the Mass of Maundy Thursday and is thus brought into relation with the Mass. The power of this holy oil used for anointing the sick would

* St. Th., III, Q. lxxiii, *art.* 3, *ad.* 3.

† See p. 94, note 2.

be better understood if the formulas employed in its consecration were studied.*

The sacrament of Holy Orders is most closely bound up with Calvary and with the Eucharist both as a sacrifice and sacrament. Was it not on the eve of His Passion that our Lord Jesus Christ conferred the priesthood upon the apostles and their successors by one and the same word, "Do this in memory of me," thus giving them the power to celebrate Mass, which He expressly declared was to be the memorial of His Passion?

"The sacrament of Order is directed to the sacrament of the Eucharist," says St. Thomas, "for the power of Order is directed either to the consecration of the Eucharist itself, or to some ministry in connection with this sacrament of the Eucharist, which is the sacrament of sacraments."†

Again he says: "The conferring of power is effected by giving them (the candidates for Orders) something pertaining to their proper act. And since the principal act of a priest is to consecrate the body and blood of Christ, the priestly character is imprinted at the very giving of the chalice under the prescribed form of words."‡ These words are: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass for the living and the dead."

"Every religion, as it began to organise itself," writes Dom Festugière, "necessarily placed sacrifice as the corner-stone at the base of its ritual edifice.

* See *Rituel des Sacrements*, supplement to D. Gaspar Lefèbvre's *Missel Quotidien et Vespéral* and *Missel des Jeunes*.

† III, (*Supp.*), Q. xxxvii, art. 2.

‡ III, (*Supp.*), Q. xxxvii, art. 5.

Sacrifice followed by communion is the germ of pagan liturgy. For sacrifice, prayers and rites are needed and this implies a class of men qualified to offer sacrifice. The first duty of the priest is the offering of sacrifice." "The essential act, and at the same time the causal principle of the liturgy, is sacrifice. From it springs the priesthood around which the organisation of worship grows up in unity."* M. Desloge adds: "The ecclesiastical orders are divided according to the functions each has to perform."†

The more or less important part taken by the ministers of the altar in the holy mysteries marks their rank in the sacred hierarchy. Whilst the door-keeper simply guards the doors of the sanctuary where the sacrifice is celebrated and convokes the faithful by ringing the bells, the lector reads the lessons from the Old Testament, the acolyte carries torches at the singing of the Gospel and presents the cruets to the sub-deacon.‡ The sub-deacon reads the Epistle at Mass and carries the chalice and host to the altar. He also pours a few drops of water into the wine. The deacon reads the Gospel, pours the wine into the chalice and is permitted to touch the sacred vessels containing the holy Eucharist. He may even, in certain cases, distribute holy Communion. Lastly, the bishop, who possesses the fulness of Orders

* *La liturgie catholique.*

† *Etudes sur la signification des choses liturgiques*, p. 345.

‡ Formerly the exorcists carried out their ministry in regard to the catechumens during the Mass which bears the name of the Mass of catechumens.

(for he alone has power to communicate his priesthood to others), celebrates pontifically and bestows major and minor Orders, the former always during the Mass, the latter usually at the same time.

The sacrament of Matrimony is also united to the Eucharist both as sacrifice and sacrament. "It was the ancient custom to perform the nuptial rite during Mass," says Dom Cabrol, "although it might be performed separately. When it was celebrated during Mass, the bride and bridegroom made the offering."* There is a Mass *Pro sponsis* in the missal, to be celebrated immediately after the marriage; in the course of this Mass the bride receives a special blessing. And if this blessing fails of its effect, the Church counsels the married couple to have the holy Sacrifice offered in honour of the Holy Ghost to beg that the wife may become a mother, *ut possis in utero portare prolem*.

Does not this new life as husband and wife involve many sacrifices? And is not the holocaust that husband and wife make of themselves when they swear fidelity to each other united in a special way, by being made during the Mass, to that holocaust offered by Jesus on the Cross, that He might make the Church His Bride, which offering the Church, together with our Lord, continues to realise on the altar?

And is not the life in common upon which husband and wife enter rendered more indissoluble by the holy Communion they receive, since all the graces of the sacrament of Matrimony are derived

* Liturgical Prayer, p. 292.

from Jesus immolated on the Cross and food of their souls? By this sacrament is most clearly seen the intimate union existing between the sacrament of love, in which Jesus gives Himself as food to the Church, His Bride, and that other sacrament of love, in which the "two in one flesh" represent these sublime nuptials, according to St. Paul's well-known words: "This is a great sacrament (marriage) in Christ and in the Church."*

All this doctrine on the connection of the sacraments with Calvary and the altar is well summed up by Le Gaudier in the following fine passage: "If we consider the sacraments with regard to their institution we must say that they flow from the bloody Sacrifice—the Passion of Jesus Christ—for then it was that by virtue of His infinite merits their institution was consummated and ratified by God. But if we consider them in their application, their integrity, their composition, then the unbloody Sacrifice—the Mass—is their source, inasmuch as it is the memorial of the sacrifice of the Cross. And indeed our Lord did not will to bestow upon us the sacrament of His Body and Blood otherwise than by means of this Sacrifice. In so doing He wished us to understand that, although there are other means of praying to God and of entreating His aid, yet none is comparable to this. That this means might never fail us He remained in the midst of His Church by the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and He who on the Cross had been the mediator between God and man continued to be so under the appearances of bread and wine.

* Eph. v, 32.

It is clear that, in the mystical Body of Christ, the Eucharist is the heart or hidden source of supernatural life and the sacraments are the arteries through which the generous blood of grace flows into all the members. They establish direct contact between the crucified Jesus and the soul, into which they pour sanctifying grace, the Christian virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

The sacraments give this divine grace, and at the same time symbolise it, by means of formulas and rites apparent to the senses. So that it is possible in some degree to follow with one's eyes God's action in the soul.* Let any one who would do this reflect, for instance, on the divine energies infused into the holy oil and the baptismal water. At the Mass of Maundy Thursday the bishop prayed that the holy chrism and the other oils might be "filled with the power of the Holy Ghost." On Holy Saturday he called down upon the water "the virtue of sanctification of the Spirit of God, who in the very beginning of the world moved upon the waters to render them fruitful." He adds a little later in the ceremony: "May the power of the Holy Ghost descend into all the water of this font, and make the whole substance of this water fruitful for regeneration." He also pours into the water oil of catechumens and chrism, making it an apt instrument for the work of sanctification to which it is destined, for through it the Holy Spirit will be almost visibly poured into souls. It is the same with the other sacraments.

* See end of chapter III and beginning of chapter IV.

And since these sacraments are given to us throughout all our existence, we may say that the whole Christian life essentially consists in receiving and in developing within ourselves the sacramental graces. Is it not, indeed, in virtue of baptismal grace that we are made children of God? The germ of sanctifying grace infused into our souls by Baptism is strengthened by Confirmation and fed by the Eucharist. If we have the misfortune to lose it, it is restored to us by the sacrament of Penance. In Holy Orders and Matrimony it is developed so as to fit the soul for its new functions, and lastly in Extreme Unction it receives a final touch of perfection, that the soul may go before its Judge with confidence.

Heavenly glory itself, that marvellous development of grace, is only the perfect consummation of supernatural graces acquired during life.

* * * * *

The sacraments do not, indeed, tend directly and immediately to the adoration and glorification of God, as does the holy Sacrifice. These sacred acts have been instituted in the first place for our sanctification and to apply to our souls the merits acquired on Calvary.

But just as our Lord lived through the mysteries of His Incarnation "in the days of his flesh," not only "in doing good" but also "in giving glory to God," so the sacraments, which have been called "the extension of the Incarnation," not only give grace to our souls but also glorify God.

The sacramental rites tend indirectly to glorify God for, being *medicamenta sanctificantia*, as St.

Bonaventure calls them, they heal souls and supernaturalise them by giving them grace at once *sanans* and *elevans*, in order that they may glorify God.

The sacraments also tend directly to the glory of God, since those who receive them “lay hold of divine realities,” and this is, as St. Thomas says, fully “*protestari divinam excellentiam*.”

Three of the sacraments tend still more directly to the glory of God—those by which a character is impressed on the soul. The Angelic Doctor tells us that “a character is ordained unto things pertaining to the divine worship; which is a protestation of faith expressed by exterior signs,”* a protestation which begins in Baptism, progresses in Confirmation and attains perfection in Holy Orders. These three sacraments are the *debita præparatio colentium Deum ad cultum ipsius*.

The sacramental character does not sanctify souls but consecrates them to God and to His service. It is a supernatural power which gives to the soul a likeness to Jesus Christ as Pontiff and causes them to share in various degrees in His eternal Priesthood.† St. Thomas also teaches that the character is derived from the sovereign Priesthood of Christ, and is given with a view to the exercise of acts of Christian worship, which are ordained to give honour to God. The sacraments ought not therefore to be considered only as sources of sanctity but also as means whereby men may give glory to the Divinity.

We will conclude this chapter by showing in

* III, Q. lxiii, *art.* 4, *ad.* 3.

† See chapter I.

what way the sacraments form part of the official worship of the Church.

The Christian liturgy being the worship organised by the Church, it has been asked by what title are the sacrifice of the Mass and the sacraments liturgical acts, since they were instituted in their essentials by Jesus Christ and are not therefore of ecclesiastical institution? In other words, are we indebted to the liturgy for sacramental graces?

Our Lord has, in fact, confided the dispensation of these treasures to the Church ("Do this in memory of me," "Baptise all nations"), and she in some sort makes them her own by administering them with religious ceremonies prescribed even in the least detail by the liturgical books.

But the Church is not content to surround these acts, instituted by Christ, with her own rites and prayers; she lends her ministry for the precisising of the essential elements (of sacrifice and) of the sacraments.

The sacraments (like the sacrifice) consist of three elements :—

(1) The matter (of the sacrifice and) of the sacraments, which is applied by the Church. In the case of certain sacraments it is not forbidden to believe that our Lord Himself left to her the choice both of matter and form.

(2) The form (of the Consecration and) of the sacraments, which is appointed to be pronounced by the ministry of priests, that is by the Church.

(3) Lastly, he who performs the (sacrificial and) sacramental rite must have the intention of doing what the Church wills.

In this sense we say that the sacrifice and sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ are acts which depend on the Church and form part of her organised liturgical worship.*

From which we may conclude, as before, that the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit, because it directly concurs in giving sacramental grace to our souls, and also because, as Dom Cabrol adds, it “gives to the faithful the means of adoring God, which, in its turn is a means whereby they may sanctify themselves.”†

* See p. 113, note 1.

† *Le culte catholique.*





THE holy Sacrifice and the Sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ essentially consist in certain formulas and rites, and it is important to distinguish between these and the ceremonies added to them by the Church in the course of centuries. The greatness of the Mass and of the sacraments does not lie in the outward pomp of ceremonies, or in the multiplicity of prayers, in the beauty of the rites or the chant, in the size and architectural correctness of the buildings erected for their celebration, or in the richness of adornment to be seen therein.

The holy Sacrifice is essentially the same, whether celebrated pontifically by the holy Father amidst the glories of St. Peter's, or by an obscure missionary in a wretched hut surrounded by a dense forest. So, too, with Baptism ; when administered solemnly to numbers of catechumens on Holy Saturday it is not greater than when it is summarily given by a layman to an infant in danger of death.

Why, then, does Canon Law require that all ceremonies omitted in private baptism should be

supplied later in the church? Why so much pomp, so many prayers, chants and rites at a solemn Mass and in the administration of sacraments? Why did Pius X declare that "the beauty and richness of the church, the splendour and careful performance of ceremonies, the number of clergy assisting, the devotion and reverence of the ministers at a solemn Mass were worthy of all praise?"*

In our days, when priests and faithful alike are overworked, would it not be better to suppress the long offices, now scarcely understood and therefore wearisome, and consequently more and more neglected? Would it not be well to reduce their number and their length, whilst safeguarding what is essential?

The Church hears all these remarks, she sees that the faithful no longer frequent her solemn offices, such as Pontifical Mass, ordinations, the blessing of ashes, candles, baptismal fonts, Rogation processions, and even the parochial High Mass and Vespers on Sundays. And yet she does not suppress them, and if she were hindered by persecution from celebrating them in public she would go back into the catacombs to celebrate them there. Without doubt she has acted like an indulgent mother and has taken into account the present circumstances and surroundings of her children, for she has lessened the number of festivals and has consented to the use of diminished rites, such as low Mass and the simple recitation of the divine Office in public as well as in private. But never will she suppress her solemn liturgy, for that alone

* *Motu proprio.*

has in an eminent degree the social and catholic character which her official worship must possess. And so, in speaking of holy Mass, the Council of Trent tells us that the solemnity with which it is celebrated is directed to this end, namely, to manifest the majesty of this great sacrifice and, by these visible tokens of religion and piety, to rouse the minds of the faithful to the contemplation of the deep mysteries which are hidden therein.*

Canon Maton writes: "The liturgy, as its name indicates, is a public function, demanding as such all exterior pomp of worship and supposing the presence of the whole community around the altar. It would, no doubt, be easy to prove historically, on the best of evidence, that the Catholic Church believed from the very beginning of her existence in the legitimacy of private Masses. Nevertheless, in practice, and in the ordinary course of things, the pomp of ceremonies, the enthusiasm of the chant, the splendour of sacred functions, seemed for a long time inseparable from the offering of sacrifice.† And even if to-day, faced with the movement which inclines the faithful to become more and more weary of the exterior solemnity of sacrifice, the Church has thought fit to relax her ancient discipline on this point, her aspirations have in nowise changed and she continues to express openly her preference for what remains of her bygone splendours.

"The ideal of Catholic piety is not to be sought

* *Sessio*, xxii, *cap.* 5.

† Cf. the *Liturgical Year*, by Dom Guéranger, *Time after Pentecost*, vol. I.

amid the intricacies of casuistry. The forms of divine worship to be preferred by truly pious souls are evidently those in which our Lord's intentions in instituting the august mystery of love are perfectly understood and fully carried out, and not those which give the greatest licence to private devotion.

"Now history bears witness that the Church, faithful and sure interpreter of the mind of her divine Spouse, maintained on this point the discipline of primitive times whilst the fervour and faith of Christian nations endured in all its vigour. As long as she could, she concentrated the energies of her children on the devout and solemn celebration of High Mass and of the other public Offices."*

The sacred ceremonies celebrated with befitting decorum in the sanctuary create an atmosphere of impressiveness which profoundly affects the senses and works on all the powers of the soul. The Church does not indeed ignore the very considerable part played by tangible and material realities in the life of man. Man first feels, then thinks. From visible things he rises to things invisible. And so exterior acts stir up within him interior feelings, which in their turn are transformed into thoughts and desires. To reach the mind of man and to influence his will one must pass through the door of his senses. That is why our Lord preached in parables, and instituted the holy Sacrifice and the sacraments under forms which may be apprehended by the senses.

Following His example, the Church employs symbolism in her worship to a great extent,

* *La famille paroissiale*, p. 65.

embodying the most exalted thoughts concerning God and the mysteries of religion in formulas and rites full of imagery. As Père Fontaine, S.J., writes : " The most authentic, imposing and popular expression of religion is not found in theology, which is not intended for the people, nor even, I venture to say, in the catechism which children learn by heart. To get at the real meaning of either, too much meditation and reasoning are required.

" Religion, as a concrete reality, must be more accessible. Man is made of matter as well as of mind, and therefore religion must appeal to his senses in order that it may enter into his life and little by little elevate and supernaturalise it.

" This marvel has been accomplished by the Christian religion through its liturgical festivals, and we no longer notice it because it is always before our eyes."*

Here we have the reason why the ceremonies, rites, formulas and objects employed by the Church in her worship are of such outstanding importance. " These rites," says the Roman catechism, " express the effects of the sacraments and, as it were, enable the faithful to see these effects with their own eyes and thus to understand better their sanctifying power. Faith, charity and other supernatural sentiments are thus enkindled in them, and it is our duty to take care that these touching and instructive ceremonies do not remain unknown to them."† " If anyone says that the ceremonies,

* *Le prône d'après le Concile de Trent*, chap. vi.

† *Pars ii*, No. xvi.

vestments, and exterior signs employed by the Church are *irritabula impietatis* rather than *officia pietatis*, let him be anathema," declares the Council of Trent,* and it hurls the same anathema at those who say that these rites "may without sin be omitted at will by her ministers." †

"For the Last Supper," says Mgr. Glorieux, "our Lord chose a large hall, richly furnished. Human genius will adopt this divine suggestion. Churches will never be too beautiful to shelter the altar and the tabernacle. Michael Angelo will poise the cupola of the Pantheon upon the arches of the basilica of Maxentius. Our Gothic cathedrals will uplift their soaring vaults, aspiring heavenwards like a prayer, yet bent in adoration.

"Conforming to the ritual of the synagogue Jesus had sung with His apostles the great Hallel of thanksgiving, the liturgical accompaniment to the eating of the Paschal Lamb. In this point, too, the Church will imitate her divine Master with enthusiasm. As on the evening of that sacred Thursday, the holy Sacrifice will be preceded, accompanied and followed by readings, chants and prayers. First, and above all, the prayer taught by our Lord Himself will be chosen; then the inspired words of the Sacred Scriptures. The Fathers of the Church, the doctors and the saints will be allowed to join in this sacred concert with their mystical interpretations. This divine poetry will not always restrict itself to the ordinary tones of speech; like other strong human feelings, it, too,

* *Sessio xxii*, can. 7.

† *Sessio vii*, *De sacr. in genere*, can. 13.

will seek its natural expression, namely, modulation, harmony of sounds, music, song.

“Thus, even in the times of the catacombs, but more especially after the first social triumph of the Church, a whole luxuriant liturgy grew up around the consecration and communion, borrowing from every tongue, adopting the most majestic, the most imposing forms, striving to fit itself for its exalted task—the duty of adoration and thanksgiving for and through the Eucharist.”*

All the gestures and prayers surrounding the essential rites instituted by Christ, that is, the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments, are acts of the Church and belong, say ancient writers, to the category of *Sacramentals*.†

Sacramentals are, therefore, rites, blessings, blessed objects, that is to say, outward signs and symbols productive of salutary effects in the soul. They do not remit sins nor produce grace of themselves, as do the sacraments, but they act *ex opere operantis Ecclesiæ, ex sua impetratione*, says Canon 1144,

* *La musique d'Eglise* : Congress of sacred music at Tourcoing, 1919, p. 59.

† Many definitions of sacramentals have been given. The ancients as Isidore, Alcuin, Amalarius, Rabanus, Rupert, Hugh of St. Victor, etc., say that they are all the observances and all the holy things employed by the Church in her exterior worship, exclusive of such as constitute the essence of the sacrifice and sacraments. They call them “minor sacraments,” because they co-operate in the work of salvation by enkindling devotion. Modern authors exclude from the sacramentals the ceremonies employed in conferring the sacraments and restrict the name to those actions and objects which, being used apart from the sacraments, in some sort resemble them more.

that is, in virtue of the all-powerful influence with God possessed by the prayer of the Church. Thus these objects (*res*) and gestures (*actiones*) produce effects in the spiritual order especially—*effectus præsertim spirituales*. They arouse our attention, excite us to repentance, and lead us to the practice of every virtue. “Because they imply a movement of detestation for sin, the *Confiteor*, the beating of one’s breast and the Lord’s Prayer conduce to the remission of venial sins, for we ask in the Lord’s Prayer: ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’ And because they include an act of reverence for God and divine things, therefore a bishop’s blessing, the sprinkling of holy water, any sacramental anointing, a prayer said in a dedicated church, and anything else of the kind, conduce to the remission of venial sins.”*

We shall understand better the importance of sacramentals if we remember that the Mass and the sacraments produce their sanctifying effects in our souls only in proportion to our good dispositions, and it is precisely these that the sacramentals help us to gain.†

For the sacramentals to produce their full effect in us we must advert to them. For instance, when we see the cloud of incense rising heavenwards from the altar, if we call to mind that it symbolises prayer ascending to God, *Dirigatur Domine oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo*, then this sacra-

* iii, Q. lxxxvii, art. 3.

† *Est sacramentale, quasi dispositio ad sacramenta, quia, ordinatur directe ad removendum prohibens, et contra omne quod effectum sacramentorum impedire potest.* Lib. iv, Dist. 2, Q. i, a. 2, ad. 7.

mental will lift up our hearts to God. If the fire of the censer makes us think of the flames of divine love which should enkindle us, *ignem sui amoris accendat Deus in cordibus nostris*, then this sacramental will fill us with the love of God. If the *Munda cor meum* said before the Gospel reminds us of the burning coal with which a seraphim purified Isaias, then this sacramental will purify our hearts. The reading of the Gospel listened to with devotion is likewise a sacramental and washes away our venial faults: *Per evangelica dicta deleantur nostra delicta*.*

The whole of the Mass, and more especially a high Mass, which, as being the prayer of the Church, is the greatest sacramental, is made up of a series of sacramentals,† from which we derive little profit since we are ignorant of their meaning.‡ The

* Although the Gospel acts as a sacramental because it is the word of God, it also acts thus because the reading of it is a liturgical act. The Church reads it because of our Lord's command, "Go and teach all nations." The words of the Gospel are not inspired by her, they are not of ecclesiastical institution. However, the Church is not content merely to surround them with her rites and ceremonies, but she determines what passages shall be read and when, reads them and frequently interprets them, bringing out their true meaning by her selection of other parts of Scripture in the composition of a Mass, and all this she does in presenting them to us as part of her worship. In this sense the passages of Holy Scripture to be found in the Missal and Breviary form part of the liturgy. (See also p. 117 and p. 131 *et seq.*)

† Holy water, *confiteor*, incense, blessing, *Pater*, the Gospel, sign of the Cross, tapers, lights, blessed bread, holy oil. Exorcisms used to be carried out at the Mass, and the Paschal lamb, food and new fruits also blessed at the same time. The blessing of ashes, palms, candles are also connected with the Mass.

‡ See p. 82 *et seq.*

same may be said of the ceremonies accompanying the administration of the sacraments.

Let us examine in detail the rites of Baptism. The priest breathes on the infant, he pronounces the various exorcisms, proceeds to the ceremony of the *ephpheta*, gives salt to the child, etc.; then, after having baptised it, he anoints it with the holy chrism, puts on it a white veil and gives it a lighted taper. All these are sacramentals which, if understood, would be a means of sanctification.

Let us study the ceremonies of the sacrament of Penance. The priest puts on a surplice and purple stole; like a judge he is seated and covers his head with a biretta; the penitent kneels before him to make his confession. It is good for us to take notice of these actions, for they help us to understand the nature of the sacrament and its effects.

Let us try to fathom the meaning of the formulas used in the blessing of ashes, tapers, holy water, etc., and we shall realise what riches there are in the liturgy.

Who could doubt the efficacy of the Church's prayer, when, for example, she blesses the palms at the Mass of Palm Sunday, saying: "We beseech thee, O holy Lord, . . . to bless and sanctify this creature of the olive-tree; . . . that all those who receive of it may be protected in soul and body." "Bless these branches, . . . that into whatever place they may be brought, those who dwell there may obtain thy blessing."

No one would dream of denying that the baptism of bells, by which the Church purifies the bronze metal and anoints it with holy chrism, lends a

special power to their sonorous voice. "May the sound of the bells," the Church prays, "drive away dangers, prevent storms and tempests from harming us ; may their voice increase the devotion of the faithful and rouse them to eagerness in hastening to their church, there to share in the divine worship."

In blessing holy water the Church says this prayer : "Fill this element of water, O God, with thy power and blessing that it may be endowed with divine grace to drive away devils." If the power of this water were known, how often we might use it to put evil spirits to flight.

Blessings of all sorts are to be found in the liturgy, but—they are not known. There are blessings for the sick, for children, for animals, for bread and wine. The Ritual also contains the blessing of houses on the feast of the Epiphany, the blessing of throats with the tapers on the feast of St. Blaise, the blessing of machinery, of aeroplanes, railways, carriages, etc. When blessing carriages, the Church says : "Hear our prayers and bless this vehicle, and entrust it to the care of thy holy angels, that all who travel therein may be preserved from every danger."

Does not the Church, at the four Ember-tides, draw down the blessing of heaven on the country at the different stages of agricultural operations ? She does this also in the Rogation litanies : "Deign to give and preserve the fruits of the earth," *ut fructus terræ dare et conservare digneris, te rogamus audi nos.*

By these exorcisms and blessings of everything

which serves for the Church's worship, begins that liberation of irrational creatures of which St. Paul says that they seem to hope for "deliverance from the servitude of corruption that they may share in the glorious liberty of the children of God."*

We will conclude this chapter by quoting from the article contributed by Père le Brun to the *Rappel*, under the title of *Les Vitamines*.†

"A pretty name, it is true, with its clear ring as of a Greek word. What does it mean? Listen! Till recently it was considered an undeniable fact that certain indispensable elements of nutrition were sufficient for the bodily organism and that before long tabloids would be prepared containing in condensed form an amount of nutrition equal to a repast.

"It was a mistake, as science has recently proved by experiments. For instance, Dr. Fafner writes that 'Eyckman fed hens, pigeons and ducks on unpolished rice exclusively. All went well. Next they were given polished rice (that is, rice stripped of its outer husk or skin); all these birds became ill and did not recover until the bran of which they had been deprived was again given to them. As this bran has scarcely any nutritive power, it must be admitted that there is something in it which is necessary for the health of animals.' Just so! These aids to the nutritive substances are *vitamines*.

"Should not the soul also be provided with its *vitamines*?

"Certainly! Have you not noticed how many

* Rom. viii, 18-23.

† *Le Rappel de Charleroi*, June 20, 1920.

analogies there are between the natural and the spiritual order?

“In this century of progress many say that to keep their souls alive the minimum suffices, that is, the Sunday Mass and Easter Communion. Others, more wise, rightly uphold frequent and daily communion. But, even among these, many easily dispense with everything else and strip the communion of all its surroundings—the prayers, readings, chants and ceremonies of the Mass, saying that all that is not essential, ‘it is not the Sacrament’!

“I agree that it is not strictly essential, but it is necessary. Now, do you see the analogy between these things and the *vitamines* ‘the minor elements of life’?

“If a soul content with the indispensable elements of nutrition be compared to another who partakes freely of the *vitamines* of religion, it will be found that the religious life of the former is starved, whilst that of the latter is full of vitality.”

Let us have confidence in the prayer of the Church and strive to profit more by the “*vitamines* of religion,” by the Sacramentals which take their part in making the liturgy the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





HOLY Mass is also the centre of the Canonical Hours which the Church obliges her three hundred and fifty-five thousand priests to recite daily. "The Holy Sacrifice," says Canon Callewaert, "is a precious jewel inserted in the golden crown of the Canonical Hours."*

"The Vigil," says Dom Cabrol, "has become the obligatory introduction to the Mass, and all the canonical hours which spring from the Vigil have been, through it, connected with the Mass."† "In my own opinion the whole of the canonical office is a development of the vigil.‡ Matins (the Night Office) and Lauds (the office recited at sunrise), according to this hypothesis, are simply the vigil separated from the Eucharistic service. The primitive office of Matins and Lauds was composed of exactly the same elements as the vigil—that is,

* *Journées liturgiques de Roulers.*

† *Op. cit.*, p. 171.

‡ Vigil was the name given to a meeting of Christians held during the night preceding a great feast, e.g. Vigil of Easter, of Pentecost, etc.

of psalmody, of readings from the Old and New Testaments, of the Gospel, the prayer and other ceremonies, such as confession of sins.”*

We find here the same elements as in the first part of the Mass or Mass of Catechumens. “The other offices of the day and night have sprung from Matins, and have evidently been inspired by the same model ; they consist of psalms with antiphons, a lesson (little chapter), a responsory, a versicle, a prayer, or even, as at Lauds and Vespers, the canticle from the Gospel as a conclusion. According to this system the whole of the Divine Office gravitates round the vigil, or, as some would prefer to say, round the Mass ; the Canonical Hours thus become, as it were, its satellites. To maintain a close union between the Canonical Hours and the Mass is therefore to keep to the true spirit of the liturgy.”†

After Matins and Lauds Prime is recited in monasteries at the first hour, according to ancient Roman time, that is, between 6 and 7 a.m. ; Terce at the third hour, about 9 a.m. ; Sext at the sixth hour, about noon ; None at the ninth hour, about 3 p.m. Vespers is recited when the evening star, *Vesper*, appears, and is followed by Compline, so that all may be finished by nightfall.

The Conventual Mass, or the High Mass, is celebrated after Terce, Sext, or None, according to the ancient rule of fasting until one or other of these Hours. Consequently the Hours recited before Mass—Matins, Lauds, Prime and Terce—prepare the priest for Mass, while those which

* *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

† *Id.*, p. 58.

follow it—Sext, None, Vespers and Compline—are a kind of prolongation of holy Mass during the day. Thus the divine Office is a powerful means of sanctification. It is always begun by the sublime prayer taught by the Master to His Apostles: “When ye pray, say: Our Father.” The *Pater* is a prayer God always listens to favourably, for He recognises it as that of His Son; but He hears it with especial favour when officially recited by the sacred hierarchy, for then the divine Spouse and His Bride the Church unite in prayer to their Father in heaven.

This they do in every Hour of the divine Office, and also at holy Mass, when the *Pater* is said by the celebrant just before holy Communion. At high Mass, and whenever Mass is sung, it is chanted to a solemn tone.

The *Ave Maria* is also said at every Canonical Hour. Composed of the angel’s salutation to our blessed Lady and of St. Elizabeth’s greeting to her, this prayer has special power when recited by the Church.

The Office contains *Creeds*.

“In the Creeds,” says St. Augustine, “we learn much in a few words, for they have a kind of sacramental power which strengthens the souls of the faithful, who find in them the solid food of faith, hope and charity.”*

There are also *Hymns*, such as the *Te Deum* and those used in the Canonical Hours, in which the sacred poets pray, praise and love God in language full of ardent piety and devotion.

* *Serm.* 109 and 131.

Antiphons, Versicles and Responsories are so many ejaculatory prayers. Being so short, they can rise to heaven like swift arrows so as to leave no time for distractions. "*Brevissima et raptim quodammodo jaculata*," says the Bishop of Hippo.

By the *Legends*, or short lives, of the *Saints*, the soul is edified, the mind is enlightened and the will is influenced for good.

The *Psalms* form one of the principal parts of the divine Office, and we find them also in the first part of the Mass. Our Lord Jesus Christ often recited the Psalms. He used to say them with the Jews in the synagogue on Sabbath days, and also in His home at Nazareth. At the Last Supper He sang the Hallel Psalms, and His last words on the Cross: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me? . . . Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," were verses of the Psalms.

Thus holy Church, when reciting the Psalms, is imitating her divine Master. "The Psalm," says St. Ephrem, "is the voice of the Church herself, the converse of heaven with earth, a prayer of sweet odour. The Psalms are a gift from heaven."* And St. Athanasius declares that "in the Psalms the Christian learns to groan with contrition for his sins, to implore God's help, to express his gratitude to Him and to sing His praises."† "The Psalms," says St. Ambrose, "are suitable for all and are loved by pious souls in every age. We find in them instruction as well as beautiful poetry.

* Tome i, *Opera*.

† *Opusc. in Ps.*

We sing them to enjoy the latter and we study them to profit by the former."

"The Christian finds in the Psalms a sweet food for the soul," says St. Bernard.* St. Basil declares that "they contain a complete theology," and "the whole foundation of faith, hope and charity," adds St. Augustine. Bossuet, speaking of the Psalter, asserts that we "find therein all the instruction and aids to man's perfection which are scattered throughout holy Scripture, and this gives the Psalms a great and unique power to raise man's heart to God." Finally, St. Alphonsus declares that "a single Psalm well said rouses all the powers of the soul and causes it to produce a hundred acts of virtue. To recite one Hour with devotion there must be in the depths of the heart a thousand good desires and pious affections."†

"The Psalms," says Lacordaire, "are the prayer of the universal Church, a prayer which contains not only ardent piety and magnificent poetry but also doctrinal teaching."‡

In the Office there are many prayers, among which the Collect has a special place. We find it at Matins, Lauds, Terce, Sext, None and Vespers. "This shows us the importance attached by the Church to this prayer, which gives, as it were, the note of the day."§ The Collect is one of the most ancient forms of prayer; it was borrowed from

* *In Cant. Serm. 7.*

† *Explanations of the Psalms and Canticles of the Divine Office.*

‡ *Mélanges du Culte de J.C. dans les Ecritures.*

§ *Explanation of the Prayers and Ceremonies of the Holy Mass,* by Dom Guéranger.

the synagogue by the early Church. When the Office is recited publicly, one says it alone in the name of all those present, and all answer: Amen, so be it. Thus it is a liturgical prayer in the full sense of the word.

Where can we find prayers more full of doctrine than those of the Church? May we be allowed to quote a characteristic example given by Dom Lambert Beauduin: "The Collect of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception is recited about fifty times during the Feast and its Octave by the Pope, the bishops, priests, deacons and sub-deacons of the whole world. This Collect contains the essence of dogmatic teaching on the blessed Virgin Mary.

(1) The Immaculate Conception is the work of the eternal Father: *Deus qui præparasti habitaculum* (efficient cause);

(2) It was wrought with a view to the Incarnation: *Dignum Filii tui habitaculum* (final cause);

(3) It is the fruit of the merits of Jesus Christ: *ex morte ejusdem Filii tui prævisa* (meritorious cause);

(4) It consists in the preservation of original innocence: *Per immaculatam Conceptionem eam ab omni labe preservasti* (formal cause);

(5) For all the members of holy Church is asked the grace of a purity of soul like Mary's (*nos quoque mundos*) to make us: *dignum habitaculum Filii tui*, a fit dwelling-place for Thy Son. And the whole Church prays to God, through the Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, and Mary Immaculate intercedes for us.*

* *Questions liturgiques*, No. 2, 1913.

The Collect is a sacramental of great efficacy which devout persons should take pleasure in reciting often during the day.

"The Breviary, the Missal, the Ritual, the Pontifical contain a series of prayers wherein we do not know what to admire most—the sublimity of their language, or their penetrating unction, or the depth of doctrinal teaching."* We hardly know these fountains of living water.

The divine Office contains many passages from the Fathers. In the Holy Rule of St. Benedict we read: "Let the divinely inspired books, both of the Old and New Testaments, be read at the night Office, and also the commentaries upon them written by the most renowned, orthodox and Catholic Fathers."†

We may say of the Breviary what he says at the end of his holy Rule: "for him who would hasten to the perfection of religion, there are the teachings of the holy Fathers, the following whereof bringeth a man to the height of perfection. What book of the holy Catholic Fathers doth not loudly proclaim how we may by a straight course reach our Creator? Moreover, the *Conferences of the Fathers*, their *Institutes* and their *Lives*, what are these but the instruments whereby those who wish to live well attain to virtue?"‡ The soul, therefore, by the recitation of the Office, comes into continual contact with the teaching of Tradition.

Finally, and above all, the Breviary contains

* Dom Cabrol, *Liturgical Prayer*.

† *Holy Rule of St. Benedict*, chap. ix.

‡ *Id.*, chap. lxxiii.

lessons taken from holy Scripture, nearly all the books of which are used. Thus in the divine Office we have the spirit of God Himself speaking to us. And we may apply to it another saying of St. Benedict: "What page or what word is there in the divinely inspired books of the Old and New Testaments that is not a most unerring rule for human life?"*

The most beautiful pages of the inspired writings are the Gospels, which, during the course of the year, put before us all the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. The whole of Matins refers in some way to the Gospel which is read at the end.† The same remark applies to the first part of the Mass, which, as we have seen, was originally equivalent to Matins.

Dom Eugène Vandeur writes: "Every morning, during the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the words of the Gospel resound in our Churches. . . . The idea slightly sketched in the Introit, summarised in the Collect, set forth in the Epistle, is made clear and is deeply impressed on the souls of the faithful by the Gospel. It is remarkable how much of the Gospels can be easily learnt by the end of a year, by those who use the Missal."‡

In the Breviary and the Missal the Church takes so much from the four Evangelists that it may be said that the principal parts of their gospels are read during the course of the year.

* *Holy Rule, ibid.*

† In the Roman Office only a few lines of the Gospel are read; in the Monastic Breviary we have the whole passage.

‡ *Revue liturgique et bénédictine*, 4^e a, No. 1.

The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke are very often used. These are called the Synoptic Gospels, because they relate, often in the same words, the same discourses and events in the life of our Lord.

Of the twenty-eight chapters of St. Matthew, only one is not quoted, viz. the third chapter.

Of the sixteen chapters of St. Mark, eight only are quoted, for his Gospel is the shortest and the most condensed.

By way of compensation, as it were, on Easter Sunday the history of the Resurrection of our Lord, and on Ascension Day, that of His Ascension, are taken from St. Mark.

Compared with the others, St. Luke's is most frequently used. Of its twenty-four chapters, the twentieth only is not quoted. It is considered to be the richest in historical facts of all the synoptic Gospels. A disciple of St. Paul, St. Luke reproduces his master's teaching with such fidelity that the Fathers of the Church call the third Gospel "the Gospel of St. Paul." Moreover, he had at his disposal various documents and oral traditions which enabled him to supply many passages found in his Gospel only. For example, he gives precious details about the childhood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But, like our divine Lord Himself, the Church has a special love for St. John, for she uses some part of all his twenty-one chapters. This Apostle, indeed, makes it his particular aim to prove the divinity of Christ. This explains why the eagle—which represents St. John because it soars higher than other birds—gradually predominated on the

ambos, as it still does on lecterns.* May we not see in this eagle an expression of our belief in our Lord's Divinity?

We give below a list of the days on which some part of the first ten chapters of St. John is read, as an example of the use made of this Gospel in the liturgy.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN.

CHAP.	VERSES.	LITURGICAL FEAST.	DATE.
I.	1-14	Nativity of our Lord (third Mass).	Dec. 25
	19-28	Third Sunday in Advent.	Dec. —
	29-34	Octave of the Epiphany.	Jan. 13
	35-51	Vigil of St. Andrew.	Nov. 29
II.	1-11	Second Sunday after the Epiphany.	
		Monday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent.	
III.	1-15	Finding of the Holy Cross.	May 3
	16-21	Monday in Whitsun week.	
IV.	5-42	Friday after the second Sunday in Lent.	
	46-53	Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost. Saints Nereus and Achilleus.	May 12
V.	1-15	Friday after the first Sunday in Lent.	
	25-29	Commemoration of all the faithful departed.	Nov. 2
VI.	1-15	Fourth Sunday in Lent.	
	44-52	Wednesday in Ember week after Pentecost.	
	56-59	Corpus Christi.	

* The Gospel was read and explained on the ambo, which was often decorated with carved figures of the four animals, symbols of the four Evangelists.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN (*cont.*).

CHAP.	VERSES.	LITURGICAL FEAST.	DATE.
VII.	1-13	Tuesday in Passion week.	
	14-31	Tuesday after the fourth Sunday in Lent.	
	32-39	Monday in Passion week.	
VIII.	1-11	Saturday after the third Sunday in Lent.	
	12-20	Saturday after the fourth Sunday in Lent.	
	21-29	Monday after the second Sunday in Lent.	
	46-59	Passion Sunday.	
IX.	1-38	Wednesday after the fourth Sunday in Lent.	
X.	1-10	Whitsun Tuesday.	
	11-16	Second Sunday after Easter.	
		St. Thomas of Canterbury.	Dec 29
		St. Josaphat.	Nov. 14
	22-38	Wednesday in Passion week.	

It will be noticed that, as a rule, the Church takes the beginning of a chapter, then continues by another passage generally closely connected with it. In the following list of the Gospels read during Paschal time, it will be seen that all four Gospels are used.

LITURGICAL FEAST.	GOSPEL.	CHAP.	VERSES.
Easter Sunday	St. Mark	XVI.	1-7
Easter Monday	St. Luke	XXIV.	13-35
Easter Tuesday	St. Luke	XXIV.	36-47
Wednesday in Easter Week	St. John	XXI.	1-14

LITURGICAL FEAST.	GOSPEL.	CHAP.	VERSES.
Thursday in Easter Week	St. John	XX.	11-18
Friday in Easter week	St. Matthew	XXVIII.	16-20
Saturday in Easter week	St. John	XX.	1-9
Low Sunday	St. John	XX.	19-31
Second Sunday after Easter	St. John	X.	11-16
Solemnity of St. Joseph	St. Luke	III.	21-23
Third Sunday after Easter	St. John	XVI.	16-22
Fourth „ „ „	St. John	XVI.	5-14
Fifth „ „ „	St. John	XVI.	23-35
Rogation Days	St. Luke	XI.	5-13
Vigil of the Ascension	St. John	XVII.	1-11
Ascension Day	St. Mark	XVI.	14-20
Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension	St. John	XV.	26-27
Whitsun Eve	St. John	XV.	15-21
Whitsunday	St. John	XV.	23-31
Monday in Whitsun Week	St. John	III.	16-21
Tuesday „ „ „	St. John	X.	1-10
Ember Wednesday in Whitsun week	St. John	VI.	44-52
Thursday in Whitsun week	St. Luke	IX.	1-6
Ember Friday in Whitsun week	St. Luke	V.	17-26
Ember Saturday in Whit- sun week	St. Luke	IV.	38-44

In this way, all that is most interesting and important in the Gospels is to be found in the liturgical books, and the divine Office, in which all these riches are contained, is thus a primary source of Christian life.

All the faithful, therefore, should drink at this fountain, by delighting in the use of the missal

and by borrowing largely from the divine Office in their private devotions. Their morning and evening prayers should closely resemble the Hours of Prime and Compline, which are the morning and evening prayers of the Church. All should be present at Vespers on Sundays or, if that is impossible, they should go to benediction in a Church where Compline is sung, for God delights to hear the voice of His Spouse: "*non frustra oravit Ecclesia*," says St. Augustine.

A priest who had read the first edition of *Liturgia* wrote: "*Prime* is for the laity the most beautiful morning prayer, and there is no evening prayer as good as *Compline*. Could not *Lauds* be used as a thanksgiving after holy Communion? *Vespers* would provide ideas, affections, aspirations, elevations, etc., for the visit to the Blessed Sacrament. How profitable it would be to souls to use the Little Hours (i.e. Terce, Sext and None) in their daily prayers!"

It is to be desired that, at least on Sundays, the faithful should be present not only at Mass, but also at the divine Office. This would be the best means of keeping holy the Lord's day, of which Bossuet wrote: "This is the day the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. It is the day of the adorable Trinity; on this day the Father created light, the Son rose again, and the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles. O holy day! O happy day! May it ever be a real Sunday, a true Lord's day, made holy by our faithful observance of it as well as by reason of its sacred institution."*

* *Elévat. iii, 7: Sur le dimanche.*

The Church sings in her hymn at Matins :

“ On this the day that saw the earth
From utter darkness first have birth ;
The day its Maker rose again,
And vanquished death and burst our chain.”

“ We assemble together on the day of the Sun because it is the day on which our Saviour rose again,” says St. Justin. Thus every Sunday throughout the year is, as it were, an echo of Easter Day : *Hæc est dies quam fecit Dominus*. On Sunday, as in Paschal time, the Church forbids fasting. At Prime the Paschal Psalm *Confitemini* is said and the Antiphon to our Lady at the end of the Hours is not sung kneeling.

On Sunday, therefore, let us not only in the morning, but also in the afternoon or evening, take part in the liturgical prayer, which gives so much glory to God and obtains for mankind so many graces. Let us be present at Vespers or Compline with the firm conviction that by this means we glorify God more, because we offer a prayer which is a part of the divine Office, that primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





WHEN instituting the Eucharist our Lord said: "Do this in memory of me." And the Church, repeating these words in the Mass, immediately continues: *Unde et memores*, "calling to mind, O Lord, the blessed passion of thy Son, and also his rising up from hell, and his glorious ascension into heaven, we offer, etc."

In the prayer *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas*, which comes earlier in the Mass, the priest said: "Receive, O holy Trinity, this offering which we make to thee in remembrance of the passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord." In the Gallican rite this prayer was still more explicit: "Receive this victim which we, both priests and faithful, make to thee in remembrance of the incarnation, birth, passion, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the coming of the Holy Ghost." The Greek Church adds this formula: "in remembrance of the second and glorious coming of the Saviour."

The Church looks upon the Mass, therefore, as a memorial not only of the death of Jesus, but also

of all the mysteries of His life. Developing what we said in an earlier chapter,* we might observe that the *Gloria in excelsis* recalls to mind the birth of Christ, the Gospel His public life, the *Hosanna* His triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, the Consecration the Pasch of our Lord, that is to say, His passage from this world to His Father. His death is the starting-point of this passage, and His resurrection the end of it, and so the Greeks call "Pasch," or Easter, the whole commemoration of this passage, including Good Friday, the "*Pascha crucifixionis*," as well as Easter Sunday, the "*Pascha resurrectionis*." The prayer *Supplices*, which follows the *Unde et memores*, refers indirectly to the Ascension, for it asks that the Victim lying on the altar may be borne to the altar in heaven, thus affirming the identity of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with Jesus the High Priest, who, forty days after His Resurrection, entered into the true Holy of holies, carrying the chalice of His own Blood.† In his Apocalypse St. John saw Him before the throne of God under the form of a lamb "as it were slain" and standing on a golden altar.

The Ordinary of the Mass alludes to all the mysteries of our Lord's life in general, but the Proper of the Mass commemorates each one in

* See chap. ii.

† We do not think that true piety is in any way helped by the attempt to represent the whole life of our Lord in the Mass, to meditate, for instance, on Jesus sent from Herod to Pilate when the priest passes from the Epistle side to the Gospel side, or on Pilate washing his hands when the priest washes his at the Lavabo, etc.

particular on the day appointed for its anniversary. "The pasch," says Dom Cabrol, "was celebrated every time the Eucharistic sacrifice was offered, but it was natural that on the anniversary day itself the feast should be observed with more solemnity."* Jesus having died and risen again at the time of the Jewish pasch, and the celebration of the holy mysteries having to take the place of the Mosaic rite which prefigured them, namely, the eating of the Paschal lamb, the Church kept the traditional date† for the feast of Easter, though putting it off till the following Sunday. The Mass of that day specially commemorated the Resurrection, and became the pivot of the whole Christian calendar. It is the solemnity of solemnities.

Very soon all the principal anniversaries of the life of Christ were celebrated in the course of the year. The words of the Mass and the Office were adapted to these feasts and the period from the fourth to the ninth century witnessed a great liturgical productivity.

To assure ourselves of this we have only to glance at the Collects :

Christmas : "O God, who hast made this most sacred night to shine forth with the brightness of the true light."

* *Liturgical Prayer*, p. 155.

† The Jews celebrated the pasch on the full moon of the first month, that is to say, the day of the full moon which coincided with or followed the spring equinox. So that practically we can fix this feast on the Sunday following the full moon which falls after March 20. Neither the date of the equinox, which is supposed to be always March 21, nor the time when the moon is at the full, agree exactly with astronomical calculations.

Epiphany : " O God, who on this day by the guidance of a star didst reveal thine only-begotten Son to the gentiles."

Candlemas : " Almighty, everlasting God . . . thine only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple."

Easter : " O God, who on this day, through thine only-begotten Son, didst overcome death and open unto us the gate of everlasting life."

Ascension : " We believe thy only-begotten Son to have this day ascended into heaven."

Whitsunday : " O God, who on this day didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit."

Prefaces, too, were composed for these anniversaries. Preface of Christmas : " By the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind." Preface of Passiontide : " God who didst set the salvation of mankind upon the tree of the cross, so that whence came death, thence also life might rise again, and he that overcame by the tree, on the tree also might be overcome ; through Christ our Lord." Preface of Easter : " Christ our pasch was sacrificed, for he is the true lamb that hath taken away the sins of the world ; who by dying hath overcome our death, and by rising again hath restored our life." Preface of the Ascension : " Jesus Christ after his resurrection appeared and showed himself to all his disciples ; and, while they beheld him, was lifted up into heaven, so that he might make us partakers of his Godhead. And the *Communicantes* which follows says : " Thine only begotten Son

our Lord on this day set at the right hand of thy glory the substance of our frail human nature which he had taken to himself." Preface of Pentecost : "Our Lord, going up above all the heavens, and sitting at thy right hand, on this day sent forth the Holy Ghost, as he had promised, on the children of adoption."

As we saw above, it is especially by the reading of the Gospel that we once more live through the different mysteries of the life of Christ in their historical order. To convince ourselves of this we have only to open the missal, beginning at the first page.

MONTH.	LITURGICAL FEAST.	SUBJECT TREATED.
Dec.	Second, third and fourth Sundays in Advent. (St. Matt., St. John, St. Luke).	St. John Baptist announces Christ.
	Ember Wednesday in Advent (St. Luke).	Annunciation of our Lady.
	Ember Friday in Advent (St. Luke).	The Visitation.
	Christmas Eve (St. Matt.).	Annunciation to St. Joseph.
	Christmas (St. Luke).	The Birth of Jesus.
Jan.	The Circumcision (St. Luke).	The Circumcision of the Saviour.
	The holy Name of Jesus (St. Luke).	He is called Jesus.
	The Epiphany (St. Matt.).	Adoration of the Magi.
	Vigil of the Epiphany (St. Matt.).	The flight into Egypt.

MONTH.	LITURGICAL FEAST.	SUBJECT TREATED.
Jan.	Sunday within the Octave (St. Luke).	The finding of Jesus in the temple.
	Octave of the Epiphany (St. John).	The baptism of Christ.
	Second Sunday after the Epiphany (St. John).	The miracle of Cana.
March.	First Sunday in Lent (St. Matt.).	The fasting of our Lord in the desert.
	The Gospels of Lent (the four evangelists).	Public life of our Lord.
April.	Palm Sunday (St. Matt.).	Triumphal entrance of Jesus.
	Maundy Thursday (St. John).	The washing of the feet at the Last Supper.
	Good Friday (St. John).	History of the Passion.
	Holy Saturday (St. Matt.).	The holy women at the Sepulchre.
	Easter Sunday (St. Mark).	The angel announces the Resurrection.
	Easter week (three evangelists).	The apparitions of our Lord.
	Low Sunday (St. John).	Our Lord appears to St. Thomas.
May.	The Ascension (St. Mark).	Jesus ascends into heaven.
June.	Whitsunday (St. John).	Our Lord promises to send the Holy Ghost, who shall bring to their minds what Jesus preached.
to	Twenty-three Sundays after Pentecost (the four evangelists).	
Nov.	Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost (St. Matt.).	The sovereign Judge appears.

“In the Church’s worship,” writes Dom Festugière, “the sacred Scriptures are so used as to make the personality of our Lord stand out prominently, and thus the liturgy possesses an organic unity far superior to the vague co-ordination such as we find in the compilation of the Bible.”*

The personality of Christ becomes a living force in the liturgy chiefly through the bond which the Church creates between the reading of the Gospel and the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist.

Listen to Bossuet: “Eternal wisdom begotten in the bosom of the Father makes Himself felt in two ways. He became visible in the flesh that He took from the womb of Mary, and He still makes Himself felt through the sacred Scriptures and the word of the Gospel; so much so that this word and these Scriptures may be regarded as a second body which He takes in order to be present with us still. There indeed we see Him—this Jesus who conversed with His apostles lives yet for us in His Gospel and pours out for our salvation the words of eternal life.”†

St. Augustine had already said: “Listen to the holy Gospel as if our Lord Himself were speaking to us. The precious words which fell from His lips have been written, preserved and repeated by us. The Lord is in heaven, but He is Truth and is here with us. Listen to the Lord.”‡

The words of Christ are the direct and sensible expression of the thoughts of God. “The things

* *La liturgie catholique.*

† Lebarq ii, p. 301, *Panég de St. Paul.*

‡ *Tract. in Joan.*

that I speak," so our Lord declared, "even as the Father said unto me, so do I speak." Like the sacred species which are the object of our adoration because they contain the Divinity, so the doctrine of Jesus claims our faith and reverence, because it is, in some manner, a portion of the eternal truth. "He who receives the holy word carelessly is no less guilty than he who allows the Body of the Son of God to fall to the ground," writes St. Cæsarius. What St. Paul said of the Eucharist, "He that eateth the body of the Lord unworthily, eateth judgement to himself,"* Jesus Christ said of His sacred word: "He who receiveth not my words, the word that I have spoken shall judge him in the last day,"† for to despise the words of Christ is to despise the divine Word, who manifests Himself to us under this form.

"Do not lose a single word of the Gospel," says Origen. "For if when receiving the Eucharist you are careful, and rightly so, not to let fall the least particle, why should you not believe that to neglect a single word of Jesus Christ is as much a sin as to neglect His Body."‡

Are we not reminded by the procession of the Gospel and the solemnity with which it is sung at High Mass that we ought to listen to this divine word with the same reverence as that we pay to the adorable Body of Christ, since both indeed receive the same marks of honour? Was it not to affirm this twofold presence of our Lord amongst us that the holy book of the Gospels

* 1 Cor. xi, 29.

† St. John xii, 48.

‡ *Hom. xiii in Exodus.*

used to be kept in the tabernacle together with the Eucharist ?

The Gospel is honoured with incense like the sacred Host, and as the latter is kept in golden vessels, so the inspired word used to be written in characters of gold on purple vellum bound in covers glistening with rich enamels and plates of gold and silver.

At the divine Office and the Mass of catechumens, with their passages from the Gospel, we communicate in the bread of doctrine, and at the Mass of the faithful, with its consecration, we communicate in the Eucharistic bread. Authors of the eighth century tell us that "the Body of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, is not only the consecrated bread and wine offered on the altar ; the Gospel, too, is the Body of Jesus Christ. When we read or hear the Gospel we are like the children of the family seated around the table of the Lord, eating the heavenly bread."*

These two communions are related one to the other. As Dom Festugière writes : "The liturgy of praise is subordinate to the liturgy of sacrifice. The page of the Gospel, sung with great pomp during the Mass, lends in anticipation a voice to the real Presence. In all times Catholic feeling has clearly recognised and piously venerated the intimate connection existing between the word of life and the Eucharistic sacrament. The incensing of the Gospel book, the custom among Christians of standing, and turning towards it whilst it is being read, the kissing of the text by the priest—

* *Etherius* and *Beatus*.

all this helps to strengthen the impression that we are assisting at a mystical evocation of Christ.”*

This evocation becomes most real at the moment of the Consecration. The somewhat far-off Christ of history, of whom the Gospel spoke to us, then descends upon the altar. The twenty centuries which separate us from Him have disappeared, so to speak, and our Lord really lives again among us in the commemoration of His mysteries. So that to bring together the Gospels of the missal and the Host, that is to say, the words uttered by Christ and His real Presence, is to make us, in some sort, His contemporaries. It seems as though He Himself speaks to us, and, as each Mass shows us only one phase of the life of Christ and the Cycle methodically follows this life from beginning to end, the altar becomes another Palestine where Christ renews each year in the Blessed Sacrament His liturgical life, the echo of His earthly life. This existence has a still more distinctly social character since Christ lives it in intimate communion with His mystical body. By the sacramental and liturgical life of Christ we must understand the life of the whole Christ, for we have seen that the end of the Eucharist and of the liturgy is to associate the Church with her Head in all His mysteries.

There are souls who, especially through Holy Communion, united to our Lord present on the altar, are born with Him at Christmas, die and rise again with Him in Holy Week, etc.; and the missal gives us the programme of this ever actual life of the Eucharistic Christ, and of Christ in His

* *La liturgie catholique*, p. 116.

Church—a reproduction of His earthly life. Did not St. Paul sum up the Christian life by saying, “that we are predestined to be made conformable to the likeness of the Son of God,” and he added, “be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” “The liturgical seasons are not merely pious functions which represent the history of our redemption in dramatic form; their principal end, as also their proper work, is to produce in us the effects of the mysteries they represent.”* This I will now explain further.

* * * * *

That each year we might be able to offer to God in the holy Sacrifice of the Mass all the glory which is given to Him by the mysteries of the Saviour, and to receive in holy Communion the fruits of sanctity they contain for ourselves, the Church has divided the year into various seasons corresponding to the different events and periods of the life of Christ.

The following is a brief scheme of these seasons :

GOSPEL.	MISSAL.	
<i>Cycle of the Incarnation.</i> 1. 2. Birth of Jesus 3. Manifestations of Jesus	<i>Cycle of Christmas.</i> Advent 4 Sundays Christmas 1 „ Time after Epiphany 1 to 6 „	Purple White Green
<i>Cycle of the Redemption.</i> 1. { The fast and the public life of Jesus, Passion of Jesus	<i>Cycle of Easter.</i> Septuagesima 3 Sundays Lent 4 „ Passiontide 2 „	Purple

* *Missel pour tous.* Mont César, Louvain.

GOSPEL.	MISSAL.	
<i>Cycle of the Redemption.</i>	<i>Cycle of Easter.</i>	
2. Resurrection and Ascension	Paschaltide 8 Sundays	White
3. Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to the Church	Time after Pentecost 24 to 28 „	Green
	— 52 Sundays	

Each of these seasons possesses a special efficacy corresponding to the mystery celebrated during that time. Of this I will give some proofs :

The Church has received from God the mission to direct our souls and, without any doubt, she has organised the whole Christian year, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to carry out this ministry of sanctification with which she has been invested.

She considers each mystery of our Lord in turn and always asks for corresponding graces. These she never fails to obtain, for, being the Bride of Christ, she asks in His name and is always heard by the Father.

During Advent, for instance, she shows us the world before the Redemption. The Patriarchs and Prophets looked forward to the coming of the Saviour's grace, as we aspire during this season to His coming in glory. The Church borrows their prayerful exclamations : Come, Lord, and tarry not ! No doubt these reiterated appeals from thousands of priests and faithful, sent up to heaven each year during the four weeks preceding Christmas, must incline God to grant us on Christmas

Day the graces merited by the Infant in the crib, and also to prepare us for His coming at the end of the world. On Christmas Eve the Collect prays : " O God, who dost gladden us by the annual expectation of our redemption, grant that we, who joyfully receive thy only-begotten Son as a redeemer (referring to the historical coming of Jesus and His coming by grace into our souls) may behold without fear the same Lord Jesus Christ coming as a Judge."

At the Epiphany the Church invites us to unite ourselves to the company of the Magi and to offer our gifts to the divine King. "As the Magi offered from their treasures mystical gifts to the Lord, so let us seek to find in our hearts gifts worthy of being offered to God."*

During Lent and Passiontide the Church leads us to Jesus fasting in the desert, and with her we follow Him as He preaches the Gospel throughout Palestine and then dies on the Cross ; and all the liturgy of this time exhorts us to penance, puts before us the word of God, and entreats us to imitate the death of Jesus in dying to ourselves.

Then at Easter (*Pasch*, *Phase*, i.e. *Transitus*) uniting ourselves to the Hebrews who at this time passed through the Red Sea, and to Jesus who passed from this world to His Father, each year we strive—thanks to the liturgy—to pass more and more from the death of sin to rise again to a new life. The Fathers are very precise on this subject : "Paschaltide is a time of indulgence and pardon."†

* St. Leo, vi. Lesson of Matins on the Epiphany.

† St. Augustine, iv. Lesson of Matins on Low Sunday.

“Yesterday I suffered with Christ on His Cross, to-day I am glorified with Him. Yesterday I died with Him, to-day I live again with Him. Yesterday I was buried with Him, to-day with Him I rise again. *Heri consepeliebar, hodie simul resurgo.*”*

St. Gregory looks at our participation in the mystery of Christ’s resurrection from another point of view. He considers us as accompanying the holy women on their way to the tomb: “The deed of these holy women in taking sweet spices to embalm the body of Jesus,” says St. Gregory at Matins, “points to somewhat which must needs be done in the holy Church. We also do come to His sepulchre bearing sweet spices, when we seek the Lord with the savour of good living, and the fragrant report of good works.”

At Pentecost, the anniversary of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, the Church makes us kneel down as we sing the verse of the Gradual, *Veni Sancte Spiritus*: “Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of thy love.” The Holy Spirit hears our prayer, so that every year this feast is like a new Pentecost for the Church. The Council of Toledo, in 650, had declared as much: “It is indispensable that the feasts of Easter, Pentecost and Christmas should everywhere be kept on the same date. For instance, if we do not celebrate Pentecost on the appointed day, we cannot receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost.”†

* St. Gregory Nazianzen, vi. Lesson of Matins on Easter Sunday in the monastic office.

† *Histoire des Conciles* (H.L.)

By means of the Liturgy, therefore, the mystical Body of Christ throughout the whole world takes part in the great work of redemption accomplished by her Head, and receives in due season all the graces which flow from the different mysteries of our Saviour's life, and most especially from His death on Calvary; for the Mass, the memorial of the Passion, is ever the centre of all Christian festivals.

"The Church," writes Dom Reylandt, "possesses the mysterious but real power, in which we must have faith, of renewing every year the sanctifying efficacy of the events of our Lord's life." Each feast of the Church is a sacramental for those who assist at it. "Liturgical acts," says Père le Vavas seur, "are performed in the name of our Lord and in the name of the Church; and just as the sacraments contain the power and merits of Jesus Christ, so liturgical acts contain in their way the power and merits of the Church."* And thus they most surely bring about the sanctification of souls.

Dom Guéranger could say in all truth that "the power of renewal possessed by the liturgical year is a mystery of the Holy Ghost, who unceasingly animates the work which He has inspired the Church to establish amongst men."

For this reason, once again, the Liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

Let us then have great faith in the efficacy of the liturgical cycle, and, since method is necessary to make progress, let us have recourse to the Church's

* *Manuel de liturgie*, Lecoffre, édit., p. 2.

official method of sanctity,* and live in close union with this good mother by sharing, through her feasts, in her joys and sorrows. Only let us do this with perseverance and energy ; for to keep it up every day of the year, and during our whole life, implies a continual renunciation of self which in practice very few possess.

* The liturgy is a practical, or if you prefer it, a direct method which shows the soul what road (*meta*, after ; *hodos*, way) she must follow to reach God.





AFTER the worship of *latria* given to God, comes the worship of *hyperdulia* given to Mary, Mother of God. We will now study the nature and extent of this worship in the liturgy.

In the divine plan Mary occupies a place apart. She is united to God in a much more intimate way than are Angels and Saints, for so closely was she associated to the work of redemption that we do not hesitate to call her the co-redeemer of the human race.

In her, through the work of the Holy Ghost, the Word was made flesh. Her *fiat* decided our salvation since it made the Incarnation possible, for God had made it depend on her consent.

This explains why the holy Virgin, Mother of a Son who is truly Son of God, is always honoured next after God. In the *Confiteor*, in the *Communicantes*, in the *Suscipe* of the Mass, in the Litanies of the Saints and everywhere, her name always comes before those of the Angels and Saints whose Queen she is.

When the Greeks wrote in letters of gold beneath

her statues the word *Theotokos*, Mother of God, they gave the reason of this super-eminent worship. The Church in her prayer never fails to show us the Mother close to her divine Son. Both are included in the same decree of predestination. The Epistles for feasts of our blessed Lady apply to Mary what is said of Wisdom in the holy Scriptures, and Wisdom is the attribute of the Word of God. "When, in Adam and Eve, the whole human race fell headlong into sin, God foretold that it should be saved through Jesus and Mary" (Office of the Immaculate Conception). "Taking that sweet Ave which from Gabriel came, peace confirm within us, changing Eva's name" (*Ave Maris Stella*).

If we draw out a parallel between the mysteries of the Rosary, as given on the feast of October 7, and the feasts of our Lady in the liturgical cycle, it becomes quite clear that in the marvellous triptych of the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of both Rosary and cycle, Jesus and Mary are ever inseparable.

MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY.	FEASTS OF THE LITURGICAL CYCLE.
<i>Joyful mysteries :</i>	
Annunciation	Ember Wednesday in } Advent
Visitation	Ember Friday in Ad- } Advent vent
Birth of Christ	Christmas Day } Christmas
Presentation	Purification (Feb. 2) } Time after
Finding in the Temple	Sunday within Octave } Epiphany of Epiphany

MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY.	FEASTS OF THE LITURGICAL CYCLE.	
<i>Sorrowful mysteries :</i>	Maundy Thursday and Good Friday	} Passion- tide
Agony		
Scourging		
Crowning with thorns		
Carrying of the Cross		
Death of Jesus		
<i>Glorious mysteries :</i>	Easter	} Paschal- tide
Resurrection	Ascension	
Ascension	Pentecost	
Descent of the Holy Ghost		
Assumption of our Lady	Assumption	} Time after Pentecost
Coronation „ „	„	

In the Christmas cycle, with which the Christian year opens, the soul breathes an atmosphere of joy, restrained at first, then overflowing, as the first five mysteries of the Rosary succeed each other. The first of these mysteries is indeed celebrated on March 25, but it is also commemorated in the month of December. "Following the custom observed elsewhere," says the Council of Toledo in 665, "the feast of the Annunciation shall be celebrated throughout Spain on December 18, for it often falls in Lent or during the solemnity of Easter." "The Annunciation was therefore connected with the liturgy of Advent from very early times."*

In the passages from the Gospel which speak of our Lady during the Christmas season (December to February) she is never separated from Jesus.

Annunciation : "Behold, thou shalt conceive and

* Dom Leclercq, *Dictionnaire Archéologique : Annonciation.*

shalt bring forth a son.” (Ember Wednesday in Advent.)

Visitation: “Elizabeth cried out: ‘Blessed is the fruit of thy womb.’” (Ember Friday in Advent.)

Christmas Eve: “Joseph, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.”

Christmas Day: “Mary brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes.” “The shepherds found Mary, and the infant lying in a manger.” (December 25.)

Epiphany: “The wise men found the child with Mary.” (January 6.)

Flight into Egypt and return: “Take the child and his mother.” (December 28 to January 5.)

Purification: “After the days of Mary’s purification were accomplished, they carried the child Jesus into the temple.” (February 2.)

Finding in the Temple: “Son, thy father and I have sought thee.” (Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany.)

Marriage at Cana: “Mary said to Jesus: ‘they have no wine.’” (Second Sunday after Epiphany.)

January 1. At one time there used to be three Masses on this day as at Christmas. The first was in honour of our Lord and the second in honour of His Mother. The prayer of this second Mass, which commemorates the glorious maternity of our blessed Lady, is the one now said.

The Easter Cycle (February to November) is specially devoted to the public life of our Lord. During this time Mary is mentioned in the Gospel on two occasions only: when she seeks Jesus and

when a woman in the crowd, having heard our Lord preach, blessed her who was His Mother. Both these passages from the Gospel are given in the liturgy, the former on Ember Wednesday in Lent, the latter on the third Sunday in Lent.

Maundy Thursday and *Good Friday* bring us to the sorrowful mysteries which "pierced the heart of Mary: the agony, the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the Cross of her Son."* On the feast of the Seven Sorrows of the blessed Virgin Mary, kept on the Friday after Passion Sunday, the Gospel tells us that "there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother."† This fact is repeated in the Gospels of Holy Week.

As for the glorious mysteries, they succeed one another in the solemnities of Paschaltide and of the Time after Pentecost, when "we congratulate the blessed Virgin on the triumphs of her Son, on the descent of the Holy Ghost, and on her glory as Queen of heaven."† In all these Mary is ever united to Jesus.

Speaking of the month of May Dom Guéranger writes: "The months of May and June pass without any special solemnity in honour of the Mother of God. It would seem as though holy Church wished to honour, by a respectful silence, the forty days during which Mary enjoyed the company of her Son after His Resurrection. We, therefore, should never separate the Mother and the Son, if we would have our Easter meditations be in strict accordance with truth. During these forty days, Jesus fre-

* Hymn for second Vespers of the Solemnity of the Rosary.

† *Id.*, *ibid.*

quently visits His disciples, weak men and sinners as they are: can He, then, keep away from His Mother, now that He is so soon to ascend into heaven, and leave her for long years on earth? We feel sure that He frequently visits her, and that, when not visibly present with her, she has Him in her soul, in a way more intimate and real than any other creature could have.

“No feast could have given expression to such a mystery; and yet the Holy Ghost, who guides the spirit of the Church, has gradually led the faithful to devote to Mary’s honour the entire month of May, the whole of which comes, almost every year, in the glad season of Easter. No doubt the loveliness of this month would, some time or other, suggest the idea of consecrating it to the holy Mother of God; but if we reflect on the divine and mysterious influence which guides the Church in all she does, we shall recognise, in this present instance, a heavenly inspiration, which prompted the faithful to unite their own joy with that of Mary and spend this beautiful month, which is radiant with their own Easter joy, in commemorating the maternal delight experienced, during that same period, by the Immaculate Mother when on earth.”* “Sweet month of May!—buoyant with sunshine, and flowers, and life, and truly worthy to be offered each year to Mary, the Mother of God—for it is the month of her Son’s triumph.”†

* *Liturgical Year: Paschal Time*, vol. II, May 24.

† *Id.* Vol. III, Vigil of the Ascension. I refer those who think that liturgists would like to suppress the month of Mary to my brochure: *Le mois de Marie mis en rapport avec la liturgie*.

To honour our Lady during the month of May is to honour Mary united to the glorious mysteries of her Son.

Whilst celebrating the triumph of Jesus, the Church delights to turn to His Mother, thus addressing her: "Rejoice, O Queen of heaven, for thy Son is risen again." In the prayer appointed to be said in the second place at Mass, from Low Sunday onwards, she asks of God, "by the intercession of Mary, that we may be delivered from present sorrow and enjoy everlasting gladness" of which the Paschal joys are a figure and a foretaste.

Some ancient missals, bound in ivory or silver, bear representations of the mystery of the Ascension, depicting our Lady in the midst of the apostles on the Mount of Olives, while Jesus ascends into heaven.

An ancient tradition says also that in the Cenacle the Holy Ghost came down first of all on Mary and afterwards on the disciples.

After the feast of Pentecost the Church keeps the feast of *Corpus Christi*. In the sacred Host she honours "the true body born of the Virgin Mary" (*Ave verum*).

On August 15 the antiphons of Vespers announce: "This day the Virgin Mary went up into heaven: rejoice that she reigneth for ever with Christ." "The Virgin Mary is taken up into the heavenly dwelling, where the King of kings sits on his starry throne."

* * * * *

To the Christological cycle, or the series of feasts in which the Church honours Mary together with

her Son, corresponds the Marial cycle. We give below a parallel between these feasts :

JESUS.	MARY.
Annunciation (Mar. 25)	Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8)
Nativity of our Lord (Dec. 25)	Nativity of our Lady (Sept 8)
Feast of the holy Name of Jesus (Jan. 1)	Feast of the holy Name of Mary (Sept. 12)
Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Feb. 2)	Presentation of our Lady in the Temple (Nov. 21)
Passion of our Lord (Good Friday)	Compassion of our Lady (Friday in Passion week)
Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord	Assumption of our Lady (Aug. 15)
Exaltation of the holy Cross (Sept. 4)	Our Lady of Seven Sorrows (Sept. 15)

Our Lady's feasts follow in the wake of those of her Son. The Marial cycle emphasises the cycle of Christ. To give honour to Christ is, indeed, the ultimate object of the honour we give to our blessed Lady and also to the saints.

Thus, on the feasts of our Lady, the Church addresses herself first to Christ : " Let us celebrate the Assumption of the blessed Virgin and let us adore Christ her Son " (Invitatory, August 15) ; " the angels rejoice at the Assumption of Mary, and give praise to the Son of God " (Introit of the Assumption).

Mary is assuredly the most beautiful trophy of our Lord's victory over the devil. He became incarnate and died on the Cross in order, first of all, to preserve His Mother from original sin and to

fill her with the fulness of His grace. Her divine maternity required that she should be preserved from original sin (Collect, December 8), that she should be ever a virgin, *virgo prius ac posterius*, says the liturgy, and that she should be without even venial sin. It was fitting, too, that the body of the Mother of God should not be touched by corruption. Jesus gained all these privileges for Mary and therefore to sing the glories of the Mother is to glorify her Son, to whom she owed them. Conversely, nothing can be more glorious for Mary than that honour should be given to her Son.

The Church is well aware of this, and consequently she can find no better way of honouring the blessed Virgin than to celebrate holy Mass and to offer the precious Blood of Jesus in thanksgiving for God's graces to Mary, thus declaring that all her privileges come from her Son. To put into Mary's hands all the glory given to God by the holy Sacrifice and the graces it holds for men has been a favourite practice of the saints, for they knew that nothing would so delight her maternal heart as to glorify her Son and to do good to souls.

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Mary, Mother of Jesus, is also mother of His mystical Body. She gave natural life to her Son, she gives supernatural life to the Bride of her Son, that is, to the faithful who, through their union with Jesus, become like Him children of this holy Mother.

Associated as she is to the mysteries by which

our redemption was wrought, she has acquired a certain jurisdiction in regard to the distribution of graces merited by these mysteries; so that we obtain them through the merits Mary gained when on earth, united to the infinite merits of Jesus, and by the continual intercession of the all-powerful Virgin together with the prayer of the Saviour.

This mediation of Mary is asserted on every page of the liturgical books, and on the initiative of Cardinal Mercier a Mass has recently been composed in honour of "Mary, mediatrix of every grace." The important part played by the Mother of God in the distribution of graces merited by her Son explains why devotion to Mary occupies so much space in the daily and annual cycle.

In the Mass, for instance, the name of Mary occurs a dozen times; she is invoked at the beginning of each Canonical Hour; the office concludes with an antiphon in her honour. There is a votive Mass of our Lady for each liturgical season. In the Litanies of the Saints she is invoked first, and under three titles.

The hymns and prayers sung on her feasts call her by a variety of beautiful titles, and express unlimited confidence in her intercession.*

Some special feasts have been introduced into the calendar, in assertion of the all-powerful mediation of Mary. The solemnity of the holy Rosary (October 7) was instituted out of gratitude for

* For example: May He who willed to be thy son, receive through thee our prayers (*Ave Maris Stella*).

the victory of Lepanto on October 7, 1571; another victory over the Turks in 1716 determined Clement XI to extend this feast to the universal Church; and Leo XIII, in order to obtain the help of our blessed Lady in very difficult times, raised it to a higher rank and gave it a new Mass and office. The feast of the Visitation (July 2) was inserted in the calendar of the Church of Rome to bring to an end the schism of the West and was raised later to the rank of second class in thanksgiving to our Lady for the deliverance of Rome and for the return of Pius IX into the Eternal City. The feast of the holy Name of Mary (September 12) was established in gratitude for the safety of the Austrian capital and the feast of our Lady of Seven Dolours (September 15) in thanksgiving for the deliverance of Pius VII.

Keeping within the calendar of the universal Church, we may add to these the feasts of Our Lady of the Snow (August 5), Our Lady of Mount Carmel (July 16), Our Lady of Mercy (September 24), Our Lady's Apparition at Lourdes (February 11)—all so many manifestations of Mary's protection in the course of centuries.

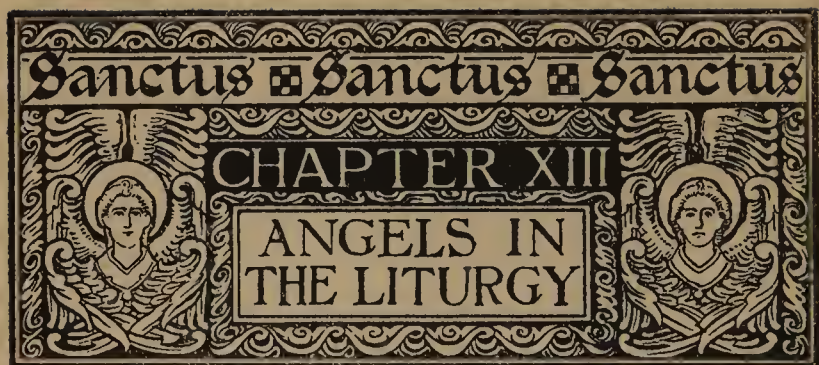
The liturgical cycle confirms the words of Leo XIII: "Every grace bestowed on this world reaches it by a path with three steps—from God to Christ, from Christ to the Virgin, and from the Virgin to us," and those of Pius X, "Christ is the source, the blessed Virgin is the canal, the neck which unites the body to the head."* How sweet

* Encycl., *Ad diem illum*, Feb. 2, 1914.

it is to think that in this way Mary is the mother of that vast multitude in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, since through her all the graces of the supernatural life flow into our souls.

By making use of our Lady's mediation the liturgy, once again, becomes the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





THE Angels played an active part in the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries of the Saviour; the Saints on earth co-operated in their turn, by their virtues and sufferings, in the redemption wrought by the Son of God. It is only right that both should have a share in applying the merits of Jesus. The Angels and Saints, united to Christ and His Mother, are so many mediators whose intervention, though in different degree, is normally necessary to enable us to glorify God and to sanctify ourselves.

We will speak first of the Angels, for their name comes in the first rank after that of the blessed Virgin, in the rubrics which accompany the Bull of Pius X, *Divino afflatu*. "The feasts of our Lord, of the blessed Virgin Mary, of the Angels, of St. John the Baptist, etc." In the *Confiteor* the priest says: "I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever a virgin, to blessed Michael the archangel, to blessed John the Baptist." St. Michael here represents all the angelic choirs as being their head. In the litanies of the Saints, after three

invocations to Mary, follow those to the Angels :
“ St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, all ye holy angels and archangels, all ye holy orders of blessed spirits, pray for us.” In the prayer for the recommendation of a departing soul, the Church says :
“ Go forth, O Christian soul, from this world, in the name of God the Father, . . . in the name of Jesus Christ, . . . in the name of the Holy Ghost, . . . in the name of the Angels and Archangels, in the name of the Thrones and Dominations, in the name of the Principalities and Powers, in the name of the Cherubim and Seraphim, in the name of the Patriarchs and Prophets, in the name of the holy Apostles, etc. . . .”

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In the Invitatory at Matins, on the feast of St. Michael God is addressed as “ King of the Archangels,” and as “ King of the Angels ” on that of the Guardian Angels.

The hymn for the Apparition of St. Michael sings of Christ as the “ glory of the holy Angels.” St. Paul declares that “ in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by him and in him. . . . And he is the head of the body, the church. . . . It hath well pleased the Father . . . through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven.”* St. Bernard writes : “ He

* Col. I. 15-20.

who has raised up man, who had fallen, granted to the Angel, who was upright, the grace not to fall; and in this manner He was Redemption equally to each class, delivering the one from its fall, and preserving the other from falling.”* Thus Jesus Christ by His blood filled up their ranks. In a responsory of the monastic office the Church says: “O blessed Cross, on thee the King of Angels triumphed.”† “The blood poured out on Calvary has profited angels as well as men.”‡

In heaven the angelic choirs join the choirs of the Saints in giving glory to the Lamb: “I beheld,” says Daniel, “till thrones were placed and the Ancient of Days sat. . . . His throne was like flames of fire. . . . Thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him. . . . The son of man came even to the Ancient of days, . . . and he gave him power and glory and a kingdom.”§ Isaias, too, had a vision: “I saw Adonai (God) sitting upon a throne high and elevated; and his train filled the temple. Upon it stood the seraphim. . . . They cried one to another, and said: Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of his glory.”¶

In his Apocalypse St. John says: “I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and

* *Serm. XXII, in Cant.*

† Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

‡ Quoted by de Maistre: *Eclaircissements sur les sacrifices.*

§ Dan. vii, 9-14.

¶ Isaias vi, 1-3.

the living creatures and the ancients (and the number of them was thousands of thousands), saying with a loud voice : The lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and benediction.”*

Whilst they sing in harmony round the altar of heaven, the angels draw nigh to our altars on earth during the holy Sacrifice. “Among the faithful,” writes St. Gregory, “who does not believe that, at the hour of sacrifice, the heavens open at the voice of Christ, the choirs of angels are present at the mysteries, the lowest is raised up to the highest, earth is joined to heaven, things visible and invisible mingle with each other and become one.”† “Let women have their heads veiled (in the church) because of the angels,”‡ says St. Paul. St. Francis of Sales writes : “The angels are always present in great numbers to honour this holy mystery, and we, by associating ourselves to them, with one and the same intention, cannot but receive many favourable influences from such a holy society. The choirs of the triumphant Church and those of the Church militant join themselves to our Lord in this divine action, that with Him, in Him and through Him we may, as it were, take God by storm and make His mercy all our own.”§ In the Mass above all do the Angels unite with us, for nothing gives them so much

* Apoc. v, 11-12.

† Dialogues iv, 58.

‡ I Cor. xi, 10.

§ *Introduction to a devout life*, Part II, ch. 14.

joy as when the holy Sacrifice is celebrated on earth in their honour.

We are told that one day, it being the feast of St. Michael, St. Gertrude prayed in these words : "In honour of this great Prince I offer to Thee, O Lord, this most holy sacrament. I offer it in praise of the elect, for the increase of their joy, for the glory and bliss of all the Angels." Then she beheld how God the Father accepted the gift she had offered to Him, and overwhelmed the heavenly spirits with ineffable delights, so that they appeared to be carried out of themselves with joy and all came to thank her.

In all our prayers we should unite ourselves with the Angels, as the Holy Scriptures tell us, and also the Fathers. "I am Raphael," said the Angel to Tobias, "one of the seven who stand before the Lord." And in the Apocalypse St. John tells us that he saw "seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."* Therefore the Lord said to Moses : "Thou shalt make seven lamps (for the tabernacle) : and shalt set them upon the candlestick, to give light over against." When a bishop sings pontifical Mass seven tapers are lighted on the altar, giving us to understand that we ought to burn with love like the Angels before the throne of God. "O ye Angels of the Lord," sings the Church, "bless ye the Lord for ever. Angels, Archangels, Thrones and Dominations, Principalities and Powers, Virtues of heaven, praise ye the Lord from the heavens."†

* Apoc. iv, 5.

† Antiphons of Lauds, May 8.

The Psalmist says : " I will sing praise to thee in the sight of the angels."* Speaking of psalmody St. Benedict writes : " Consider how it behoveth us to be in the sight of God and the angels, and so let us take our part in the psalmody that mind and voice accord together."†

Commenting on another verse of the Psalms : " Upon a psaltery of ten strings I will sing praises unto thee," St. Anselm says that " the first nine strings of this harp are the nine choirs of angels, strings which sound sweet and clear, without any tinge of sadness. But we, my brethren, are the tenth string, we who are children of that Church which is still a pilgrim in this land of exile ; yet we must strive to bring forth sounds in harmony with those of the angels. With their loving ministry they adorn our souls with the virginal whiteness of innocence, the purple of charity or the sweet odour of penance." When we pray, let us remember to join our adoration to that of our angel guardian.

The liturgy associates us who are still on earth to the ministry of the angels in heaven and shows us the part they take in all the mysteries of our salvation by inviting us to celebrate them in their society.

Thus at Christmas the Church sings : " With the angel was a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying : Glory to God in the highest."‡ " This day Christ is born ; this day the Saviour hath appeared ; this day the angels

* Ps. cxxxvii, 1.

† Antiphon at Lauds.

‡ *Holy Rule*, chap. XIX.

sing on earth, the archangels rejoice ; this day the just exult, saying : Glory be to God in the highest.”* And at the midnight Mass the priest intones the glad angelic hymn : *Gloria in excelsis*.

On Palm Sunday the Church salutes Christ in these words : “ Thy praise in heaven the host angelic sings ; on earth mankind, with all created things. Glory and praise and honour be to thee, O Christ, our King and Redeemer.”†

At Easter, in the second lesson of Matins, St. Gregory says, speaking of the angels who appeared to the holy women near the sepulchre : “ The angel appeared clothed with a white robe, for he was herald of the joy of this great solemnity. The whiteness of his raiment told of the brightness of this holy festival of ours. Of ours, said I, or of his ? If we will speak the truth we must acknowledge that it is both his and ours. The rising again of our Redeemer is a festival for us because it gave us back the life which is for ever ; and for angels also it is a festival of gladness, since we are called to fulfil their number in heaven. And so on this high festival which is both his and ours the angel appeared in white raiment, for as the Lord rising again from the dead leads us to heaven, He repairs the breaches of the heavenly Fatherland.” On Holy Saturday the deacon begins the *Exultet* with these words : “ Let the angelic choirs of heaven now rejoice ; let the divine mysteries be celebrated with gladness and let the trumpet of salvation sound for the victory of so great a King ! ”

* *Magn. Ant.* of 2nd Vespers.

† *Gloria laus.*

Thou, through the starry orbs this day
Didst to Thy throne ascend,
Thenceforth to reign in sovereign power
And glory without end.

There, seated in thy majesty,
To Thee submissive bow
The heaven of heavens, the earth beneath
The realms of hell below.

With trembling there the angels see
The changed estate of men ;
The flesh which sinned by Flesh redeemed :
Man in the Godhead reign.

In one of the lessons for the same feast St. Leo thus magnifies the triumph of Jesus Christ : " In presence of that holy multitude human nature was exalted above all creatures even heavenly, rising above the ranks of the angelic armies, leaving behind the most noble archangels, to rest no lower than that place where it taketh its seat with the eternal Father, sharer of His throne and partaker of His glory, to whose nature it was joined in His Son." In the fifth lesson for Monday within the Octave of the Ascension, St. John Chrysostom writes : " It was not enough of glory for Christ to be exalted above the heavens, nor to be ranked with angels ; but His human nature was exalted above the heavens, He went up above the Cherubim, He ascended beyond the Seraphim, neither found He his rank beneath the throne of the Lord of lords. . . . Above all these has one of our nature

been exalted, so that man who had fallen so low that there was no farther fall for him, is now in place so high, that there is thence no ascending. . . . A Person, sharer of our nature, has taken the place which is His of right, above all things other than Himself. This day angels and archangels beheld our nature upon the throne of the Lord, refulgent with eternal glory." At Matins of Wednesday in the same Octave, St. Gregory adds : "It was a great festival for the angels, when the Man-God entered heaven, . . . and as white raiment is a sign of joy, . . . the angels appeared clothed in white at His Ascension, because in this mystery human nature was exalted."

On the feast of our Lady's Assumption the Church sings that Mary was raised above the heavenly spirits who salute her as their Queen. "The holy Mother of God has been exalted above the choirs of angels, to the heavenly kingdom." "Mary is taken up into heaven : the angels rejoice and praising bless the Lord" (Antiphons). "The Angels sing hymns, the Archangels sing aloud, the Virtues ascribe glory, the Principalities shout for joy, the Dominations rejoice, the Thrones keep holiday, the Cherubim utter praise, the Seraphim proclaim her glory."*

On all the solemn festivals, the Preface, after having briefly defined the mystery of the day, invites us to join with the heavenly armies in praising God. Christmas : "By the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind" ; Easter :

* 4th Lesson at Matins.

“Christ our pasch was sacrificed”; Ascension: “After his resurrection . . . (Jesus) was lifted up into heaven”; and “therefore with the angels and archangels, . . . we sing the hymn of thy glory, etc.”

The angels come to meet the souls of the faithful in the hour of death. “When thy soul shall depart from thy body, may the resplendent multitude of the angels meet thee,” says the priest in the recommendation of the soul. “May the most wicked enemy with all his evil spirits be forced to give way before thee; may he tremble at thy coming in the company of angels.” In another prayer he had said: “Go forth, O Christian soul, out of this world, . . . in the name of the angels and archangels; in the name of the thrones and dominations; in the name of the principalities and powers; in the name of the cherubim and seraphim.” Again he prays: “Let the heavens be opened to him, and the angels rejoice with him. . . . Let St. Michael, the archangel of God, whom thou hast appointed chief of the heavenly host, conduct him. Let the holy angels of God come forth to meet him, and carry him to the city of the heavenly Jerusalem.” When the soul has departed, the following responsory is said: “Come to his aid, all ye saints of God; attend, all ye angels of God: receiving his soul, offering it in the sight of the Most High.”

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Angels, like men, are members of the mystical body of Christ. Through Jesus Christ, their Head,

they pay their homage to the divine majesty in union with all the Church militant. *Per quem majestatem tuam laudant angeli*,—"through Christ the angels praise thy majesty, the dominions worship it, the powers are in awe; the heavens, and the heavenly hosts, and the blessed seraphim join together in celebrating their joy" (Common Preface).

"When thou didst pray with tears," said Raphael to Tobias, "I offered thy prayer to the Lord."* Twice in his holy Rule St. Benedict declares that "day and night what we do is made known to God by the angels appointed to watch over us."†

At the *Confiteor* both celebrant and faithful invoke the intercession of St. Michael, *ideo precor beatum Michaellem Archangelum*.

When incensing the altar at the Offertory the priest prays: "By the intercession of the blessed archangel Michael, who standeth at the right side of the altar of incense, and of all his elect, may the Lord vouchsafe to bless this incense and to receive it for a sweet savour."

This is an allusion to what St. John saw in heaven: "An angel stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel."‡

The angels do indeed offer our prayers to God,

* Tobias xii, 12.

† Apoc. viii, 3.

‡ Chapter vii.

but by the orders and through the intermediary of Michael "prince of the heavenly host." As the liturgy says: "O most glorious Prince, Michael the Archangel, be mindful of us; here and everywhere pray to the Son of God for us, alleluia."*

After consecrating the sacred species the celebrant bows low and says: "We most humbly beseech thee, almighty God, to command that these things be borne by the hands of thy holy angel to thine altar on high, in the sight of thy divine majesty that . . . we may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace." Durandus says: "Clearly we ought to believe that the angel is present at the holy mysteries to offer to God the prayers of priest and people."† Bossuet thus comments on this passage: "We could not do better than ask the holy angel who presides over prayer to take us into his company and that of all the saints who are one with him in bliss, that our offering may rise unhindered even to the heavenly altar and may appease Him to whom it is to be presented in the sight of this blessed throng."‡

Explaining those words of our Lord: "Their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father," St. Hilary writes as follows: "That the angels have charge of the prayers of the faithful is taught us absolutely. The angels therefore do every day offer to God the prayers of those whom Christ has saved. Therefore it is dangerous for a man to despise one whose wishes and requests are

* *Magnif. Ant.*, 2nd Vespers, May 8.

† *Rational*, t. ii, p. 322.

‡ *Médit.* xiv.

presented before the throne of the eternal and unseen God by the watchful service and ministry of the angels.”*

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God is pleased to apply the merits of Jesus Christ to us by means of the angels, because of the greater excellence of their nature, and also because of their share in the mysteries of our salvation. Origen tells us that “when they go up into heaven they carry our prayers thither and when they come down upon earth they bring to us the gifts of God.”

The angels have taken an active part in the work of our redemption. In the Old Testament we read that St. Raphael appeared and in the New Testament we are told that St. Michael was seen. A wicked angel had tempted Eve in the earthly paradise and through her caused Adam’s fall. The archangel Gabriel came to seek the consent of the “new Eve” to the Incarnation of the “new Adam” who should raise us up again. When Jesus came into the world the angels adored Him. The devil tempted our Lord in the desert and the angels came to minister to Him. An angel of the Lord came to comfort the Redeemer in Gethsemane. And we know how closely the angels were bound up with the glorious mysteries of the Saviour. We cannot therefore be astonished to find them acting as intermediaries between God and men in the distribution of the graces flowing from these mysteries. This angelic mediation is definitely taught by the liturgy.

* 9th Lesson of Matins of Oct. 2.

At the *Asperges me* the priest asks God in the prayer "to send his holy angel from heaven to guard, nourish, protect, visit and defend all that have come together in the church."

At the *Munda cor* the celebrant says: "Cleanse my heart and my lips, O God almighty, who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal." The prophet's lips were cleansed by the hand of an angel. "I said: Woe is me, because I have held my peace, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people that hath unclean lips! And one of the seraphim flew to me: and in his hand was a live coal, which he had taken with the tongs off the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said: Behold this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquities shall be taken away, and thy sin shall be cleansed."* To this angel we turn at the altar that God may cleanse us by his hand.

At the end of the Mass the celebrant says a prayer at the foot of the altar in which he again calls upon the Prince of the angels. "Holy Michael archangel, defend us in the day of battle; . . . by the power of God thrust down to hell Satan and all the wicked spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls."

At the baptism of adults the Church asks of God that "as an angel was set to watch day and night over the children of Israel when they went out of Egypt, so may He be pleased to send his holy angel from heaven to watch over these catechumens and to lead them to the grace of baptism."†

* Isaias vi, 5-7.

† *Ritual for baptism of adults.*

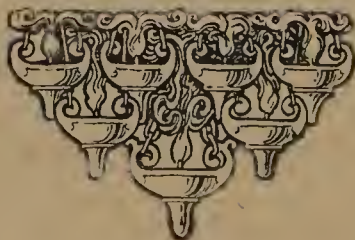
At the blessing of the ashes the Church prays to God to “vouchsafe to send his holy angel from heaven to bless and hallow these ashes.” When she blesses a grave, a bridge, a carriage, she begs God to appoint one of His angels to keep it.

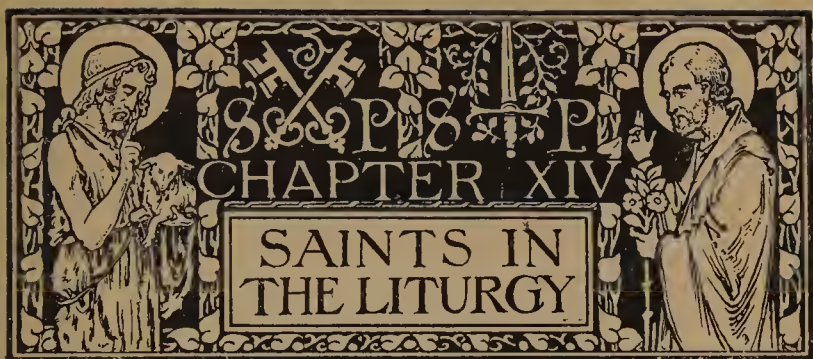
The liturgy is full of the thought of how, by the ministry of the angels, God comes to us and we go to Him. They are our intermediaries. Thus the teaching of the earliest Fathers is confirmed, that the angelic hierarchy corresponds to the ecclesiastical hierarchy and that as we make use of the mediation of Pope, bishops and priests, so we should likewise have recourse to that of St. Michael, prince of the heavenly host, of the angels of the diocese and of each church.*

Therefore the Church in her worship, by constantly calling upon the angels as mediators, leads us to honour God through them in a way most pleasing to Him and teaches us to look with confidence to them for all the graces we need.

We have here another reason for believing that the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

* Each diocese and parish has its guardian angel. In Brazil a feast is kept in honour of the guardian angel of the country.





AFTER the Angels the Church honours the Saints. To this end the Time after Pentecost is specially set aside, for then is celebrated the work of sanctification attributed to the Holy Ghost. During this period, which takes up half the year, the greater number of Saints' feasts are naturally to be found. First of all, as surpassing all others, must be mentioned that of All Saints on November 1, a feast of obligation with a Vigil and Octave.

Among the principal Saints the liturgy sanctions the following order which is adopted in the litanies of the Saints. After the holy angels come: "St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, the holy patriarchs and prophets, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Andrew, St. John, all the holy apostles and evangelists, etc. . . ." In the *Confiteor*, too, after St. Michael, mention is made of "St. John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul and all the saints."

This order is owing to the more or less important function fulfilled by the saints in the plan of the Incarnation. To St. John the Baptist belongs the

first place as forerunner of the Saviour. Like the other saints, he is honoured on the day of his death (August 29); but by a privilege which he shares with the blessed Virgin and our Lord, his birthday (June 24) is observed as a feast of the first class with Vigil and Octave, and was kept as a holiday until the reform of the calendar in 1911. It is to be desired that the faithful should again cultivate devotion to him; traditional and popular customs such as the bonfires of St. John still witness to the veneration in which he was formerly held.

After him comes St. Joseph on March 19. As Lent does not allow of Octaves, another feast, called the Solemnity of St. Joseph, and carrying with it an Octave, has been instituted on the Wednesday of the third week of Easter. St. Joseph is the chaste husband of Mary, and by this true marriage he is the father of the child Jesus and exercises certain rights over the blessed fruit of his virginal spouse. He is also the patron of the universal Church. A proper Preface is assigned to him in which these titles are set forth.

Next come the Apostles,* for they lived in

* St. Andrew, with a Vigil (November 30). St. Thomas, with a Vigil (December 21). St. John, with an Octave Day (December 27). St. Mathias, with a Vigil (February 24). SS. Philip and James (May 1). SS. Peter and Paul, with a Vigil (June 29). St. James, with a Vigil (July 25). St. Bartholomew, with a Vigil (August 24). St. Matthew, with a Vigil (September 21). SS. Simon and Jude, with a Vigil (October 28). St. Mark, evangelist (April 25). St. Luke, evangelist (October 18).

intimacy with our Lord, and were chosen to preach His Gospel in the world. Formerly their feasts were observed as holidays like the Sunday. With two exceptions they are preceded by a Vigil which shows us the importance in which they ought to be held. Let us keep them holy by assisting at Mass and receiving Communion, instead of letting them pass by unnoted as too often happens. Would it not be possible to draw attention to these feasts in schools and colleges, if only by bestowing some little favour on the children?

June 29, the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Peter, the head of the Church, and of St. Paul, the doctor of the Gentiles, is reckoned as one of the greatest solemnities. This feast carries with it the obligation of hearing Mass and of resting from servile work.* It is followed by an Octave and preceded by a Vigil which, until the recent publication of the code of Canon Law, was observed as a day of fasting by all the faithful.

On this day we should pray especially for the Pope, the successor of St. Peter. In the course of the year five other feasts are kept in honour of these two apostles.†

The feasts of the patron saints of a nation, a diocese, or a parish, are placed by the Church in

* The concordat suppressed this obligation for France and Belgium.

† St. Peter's Chair at Rome (January 18). Conversion of St. Paul (January 25). St. Peter's Chair at Antioch (February 22). Commemoration of St. Paul (June 30). St. Peter's Chains (August 1).

the rank of the greatest solemnities because these regions or localities have been Christianised by their labours. These saints are our fathers in the faith and from the height of heaven they ever continue to extend their protection to the country where once they lived, where they are venerated, and where their relics are preserved.

The feast of the Dedication of churches is also very important. The Dedication of the basilica of our Saviour in Rome (November 9) is kept throughout the Church, as is also the feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord, co-titular of this basilica (August 6). This church was the first centre of Catholic worship.

In addition to these there are the feasts of the Dedication of the basilicas of SS. Peter and Paul (November 18), which were erected in each case on the spot where these two apostles were martyred, and of St. Mary Major (August 5), the largest basilica consecrated to the blessed Virgin in the Eternal City. There are kept portions of the crib of the infant Jesus ; thus is Bethlehem represented in Rome. Calvary is represented there by the Basilica of Holy Cross in Jerusalem where are preserved earth brought from Golgotha and some relics of the holy Cross. The Church venerates the relics of the true Cross above all others as is shown by the ceremony of the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday and by the feasts of the Finding of the Holy Cross (May 3) and of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14). The liturgy glorifies the sacred wood on which

our Saviour died; it sings the praises of the tree planted in the paradise of the Church, whose blessed fruit restores to life those to whom the tree planted in the midst of the earthly paradise had brought death.

After the Apostles the first saints to be honoured were the martyrs. Churches were built over the place of their martyrdom or above their tombs. In the catacombs the holy mysteries were celebrated over their bodies, and thence arose the custom of putting relics in the altar stone.* Thus are the martyrs united to the Martyr of Calvary, for whom they shed their blood as “witness” of their faith in Him.

The greatest among the martyrs are the Holy Innocents (December 28), who, still in infancy, were baptised in their own blood and confessed Jesus *non loquendo sed moriendo*—not by speaking but by dying for Him; St. Stephen, protomartyr (December 26), whose feast has an Octave day, and St. Laurence (August 10), whose feast is preceded by a Vigil and also has an Octave day.

Afterwards come all the other holy bishops, confessors, virgins, holy women and widows, and among these we notice first of all, because so intimately associated with the divine plan, St. Joachim and St. Anne, parents of the blessed Virgin Mary.

To certain of her holy Confessors the Church gives the title of Doctor. There are four great

* Relics have always been venerated in the Church and so, in many dioceses, a feast is kept in honour of the relics preserved there.

doctors of the Greek Church,* four of the Latin Church† and seventeen others.‡

The Church honours the following as the chief legislators of the Religious Orders: St. Benedict, founder of the Benedictines (double major, March 21); St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscans (double major, October 4); St. Dominic, founder of the Dominicans (double major, August 4); St. Ignatius, founder of the Jesuits (double, July 31); St. Alphonsus, founder of the Redemptorists (double, August 2), etc. . . .

All these feasts of Saints, belonging to different periods, give, in short, the history of the Church through all times. It is most useful to read their lives on their respective feast-days, as the Church does in the legends of the breviary.

At first there were few Saints in the Christian calendar, but they became more and more numerous as each century produced new ones. "The offices of the Saints have gradually multiplied," declares Pius X, "with the result that the liturgy of the

* St. John Chrysostom (January 27). St. Athanasius (May 2). St. Basil (June 14). St. Gregory Nazianzen (May 9).

† St. Jerome (September 30). St. Augustine (August 28). St. Gregory the Great (March 12). St. Ambrose (December 7).

‡ St. Hilary (January 14). St. Francis of Sales (January 29). St. Cyril of Alexandria (February 9). St. Peter Damian (February 23). St. Leander (February 27). St. Thomas of Aquin (March 7). St. Cyril of Jerusalem (March 18). St. John Damascene (March 27). St. Isidore (April 4). St. Leo (April 11). St. Anselm (April 21). St. Bede (May 27). St. Bonaventure (July 14). St. Alphonsus (August 2). St. Bernard (August 20). St. Peter Chrysologus (December 4). St. Ephrem was declared a Doctor by Benedict XV.

Sundays and ferias has been almost entirely put aside." This might be harmful if the soul, absorbed in the feasts of those who were only secondary instruments in the work of our redemption, should lose sight of its principal author, our Lord, through neglecting the traditional plan of the great mysteries of our religion. Therefore the Holy Father, wishing to restore all things in Christ, gave back to the Christological cycle the pre-eminence which rightly belonged to it. When the feasts of Saints were restrained within due limits, the leading lines of the Proper of the Time once more came into view. The Proper of the Saints has almost always to give place to the Sundays and to those great feasts which, in the course of the year, bring before us the whole life of Jesus and all that He did. The Gospel being thus restored to a position of eminence, the Saints who laboured with our Saviour take their proper place and are duly honoured by the Church. It is to be desired that this hierarchy among the Saints should be observed in the devotion we show them. One of the advantages of the liturgy is precisely this—that by its means we venerate all the Saints in the course of the year according to their respective dignity.

Save for rare exceptions, we may remark that neither in the office nor in the Mass does the Church address them directly; rather she speaks to God, whom she recognises as the author of all sanctity. Thus the invitatory of Matins is generally couched in these terms: "Come, let us adore the King of the Apostles, . . . of the Martyrs, . . . of the Confessors, . . . of the Virgins," according to

the category under which happens to fall the Saint whose feast is celebrated. The Collects are never addressed to the Saints ; they simply ask for their intercession, after having made mention of the marvels of grace wrought in them by God. For instance, on January 25, the Conversion of St. Paul : " O God, who hast taught the whole world by the preaching of blessed Paul, etc. . . . etc. . . ." On February 5, St. Agatha : " O God, who amongst the marvels of thy mighty power hast granted the triumph of martyrdom even to weak women . . ." etc.

Because devotion to the Saints consists above all in glorifying God for His work in them, therefore the Mass, the supreme homage of adoration given to God, is also the greatest homage that can be given to the Saints. To celebrate the holy Sacrifice in honour of the Saints is, indeed, to offer to God the precious Blood of Jesus in infinite adoration and thanksgiving for all the favours He has bestowed on them. And the Saints, eager to give glory to the most High for all He has done for them, are particularly grateful if we unite our intention to theirs. It adds to their happiness.

If we consider the sacrifice of the New Law as a sacrifice of expiation and impetration, then to offer it to God on the feasts of the Saints is to offer—together with the merits and prayer of our Lord—the merits acquired by the Saints and their actual intercession.

The Saints are especially powerful with God on the anniversary of their entrance into heaven, that is, on their feast day. Thus the prayers of their

Mass always speak of their merits or their intercession. In the Post-communion of the Solemnity of St. Joseph, for example, we ask of God that: "by the merits and intercession of blessed Joseph we may be made partakers of his glory in heaven."

We read in the Old Testament that when Moses prayed to the Most High, he sought to appease Him through the mediation of the Patriarchs.* Azarias in the furnace thus entreated Him: "O Lord, the God of our fathers, . . . take not away thy mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham thy beloved and Isaac thy servant and Israel thy holy one."† "I will protect Jerusalem and will save it for my own sake, and for David my servant's sake,"‡ declared the prophet to King Ezechias. The Church will not fail to follow this example and to call upon the "God of our fathers, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God who didst appear on Mount Sinai to thy servant Moses, etc. . . ."§ But more often she substitutes the Saints for the Patriarchs and Prophets or uses both together. "God of Angels, God of Archangels, God of Patriarchs, God of Prophets, God of Apostles, God of Martyrs, God of Confessors, God of Virgins, etc."¶ On the feast of All Saints she asks of God that "as we pay honour to the merits of all the Saints on this single festival day; inasmuch

* Exod. xxxii, 13.

† Dan. iii, 35.

‡ 4 Kings xix, 34.

§ Ritual for the baptism of adults and Nuptial Mass.

¶ Ritual, *ibid.*

as so many are pleading for us, he may grant us the fulness of his mercy for which we long" (Collect).

Such is the mystery of the Communion of Saints in virtue of which they, although dwelling in heaven, are closely united to us, for like ourselves they are members of the mystical body of Christ and through them the divine life of our Head passes even to us. They are our advocates with God, who, uniting themselves to Jesus Christ, continually plead our cause. And, therefore, in the mind of the Church they are never separated from the Victim of Calvary. Their relics are placed in the altar, and at the Canon of the Mass the memory of all the Saints is honoured (*Communicantes*). As St. Augustine says: "All that city which has been redeemed, that is, the company and society of the Saints, forms but one sacrifice which is offered to God by the great High Priest who offered Himself for us in His Passion." The holocaust of Jesus and that of His Saints, united in the Mass, must draw down upon us many graces.

* * * * *

Lastly, devotion to the Saints, as set before us in the liturgy, consists in imitating their virtues. In the Collect for the feast of SS. Philip and James (May 1) we pray that "as we rejoice in their merits, so we may be taught by their example." In that of St. Agatha (February 5) we say: "Grant in thy mercy that we who keep the birthday of blessed Agatha, thy virgin and martyr may, by her example, advance nearer to thee."

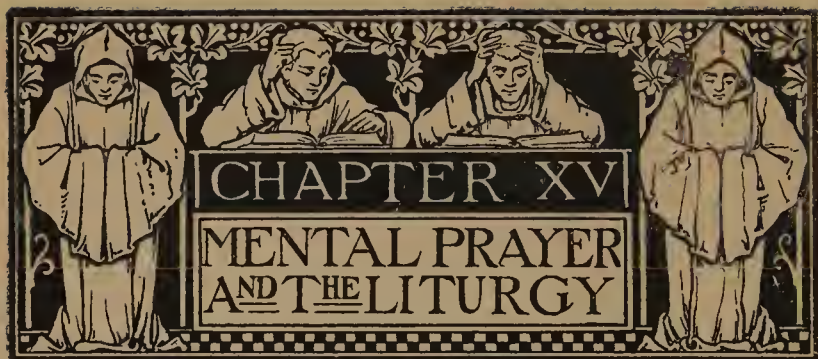
It is impossible to overrate the moral influence

of all the acts of generosity and virtue practised by the Saints, and recalled each day by the Church. The example of their edifying lives, thus kept constantly before our eyes, helps us to avoid evil and to seek more fervently the things that are above.

At Athens, in the public square, the citizens raised statues to the heroes of their country, and at the sight of their warlike bearing they drew themselves up. This is what the liturgy does for Christians. By contemplating these saintly heroes they brace themselves up and drink in new strength to go forward in the way of holiness.

For this reason also the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.





THE liturgy is not merely a manner of worship by means of formulas and ceremonies. "They think that in their much speaking they may be heard," said our Lord, referring to the Pharisees who cared only for exterior rites. And indeed many of the faithful think they have done all that is required when they have recited certain parts of the liturgy and sung a little plain chant without a mistake. We must adore in spirit and in truth, for does not Christ declare that "God is a spirit ; and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth ? "

The sacrifice of the Mass, the centre of the Church's official worship, is an exterior rite which, as we have seen, benefits those only who sacrifice themselves with the divine Victim, not only with sensible devotion but also in reality.

The Sacraments are signs perceptible to the senses which, although they produce their effects without fail, sanctify those who receive them only in proportion to their interior dispositions.

The divine Office is a vocal prayer which must

be said in a spirit of prayer if we wish God to hear us. As St. Benedict says : “ Let us remember that not for our much speaking, but for our purity of heart and tears of compunction shall we be heard ”* ; and speaking of the manner of saying the Office he says, as we have already quoted : “ In psalmody let our mind be filled with the thoughts expressed in the words we are saying : *mens nostra concordet voci nostræ*,”† that is to say, our vocal prayer must be also mental prayer.

“ It is not sufficient to assure the dignity and the good material execution of the divine Office,” writes Dom Delatte. “ Our mind must realise to whom word and song are addressed and must be attentive to the thought of the Psalmist and of the Church. As the voice rings out, the heart must grow fervent, and to complete the harmony our lives themselves must be brought into accord with thought and love and voice. Then, and then only, will the liturgy attain its twofold end, of honouring God and sanctifying our souls.”‡

Although it is an error to imagine that the liturgical worship of the Church is a kind of ritualism without a soul, it is no less fatal to believe that when time has been given to official prayer, one is no longer bound to the exercise of private prayer.

Did not our Lord Himself say : “ When thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut

* *Holy Rule*, chap. xx : *Of reverence at prayer*.

† *Id.*, chap. xix.

‡ *Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict*, by Dom Delatte ; chap. xix, p. 188.

the door, pray to thy Father in secret : and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee” ?* And has not tradition always maintained by the voice of the Fathers of the Church that prayer is indispensable at all times, for we must ever keep up our love for God ?

In the scientific world reflection is a necessity in order to penetrate deeper into any science and to engrave what we have acquired in our memory ; and in the supernatural world, if we would know God and ourselves, if we would seek good and avoid evil, we must often think of these things and meditate on them in the course of the day. Then, and then only, by the deifying light and in the divine intercourse which we call prayer, shall we become more aware of the divine greatness and of our own nothingness and consequently of our own obligations as well as the advantages to be gained from this knowledge. If these advantages are not known we shall despise them, and if these obligations are forgotten we shall violate them. *Ignoti nulla cupido.*

“Liturgical prayer,” says Dom Ryelandt, “is essentially collective and social in form, and, however beautiful and holy it may be, could never entirely satisfy the needs which souls whom God draws to Himself experience in their own interior life. For those who feel the want, either of working out for themselves real and personal conceptions of the truths of faith, or of praying in silence to repent of their sins, to thank and love God and to humble themselves, it is absolutely necessary

* Matt. vi, 6.

that over and above the duties of official worship they should set aside some time to pray and meditate in private. No matter how beautiful the words of the Psalms or the liturgical prayers, meditation and private prayer must retain a place in all normal interior life.”*

Meditation, therefore, is a necessity for every Christian, and there is no need to be frightened at the thought of it, as so many people are, for it consists simply in the union of reflection and prayer. “Read a little at a time,” says Fénelon, “read slowly and without eagerness, read lovingly.”† When I read thus, asking God to enlighten me, my understanding first of all sets to work to saturate itself with the truth and then puts it before the will as a good to be desired; my will, which loves only in so far as it knows, is kindled in its turn by divine charity and bestirs itself in prayer to make practical resolutions. With beginners the understanding plays a larger part than the will, and this is meditation properly so called; with the more advanced, on the contrary, the heart is more exercised than the mind and this is prayer properly so called. In both cases reflection precedes, affection or devotion follows; the former is the means, the latter is the end. Thus both are spoken of by masters of the spiritual life under the generic name of prayer, for meditation and prayer are inseparable and in practice are always found together up to a certain point. “When you read

* *Semaine liturgique de Maredsous: Bréviaire et Méditation*, p. 173.

† *Œuvres complètes*, t. iii, p. 192.

God speaks to you," says St. Augustine, "and when you pray you speak to God."* The understanding listens and the heart replies, for the mind is penetrated with unction and love.

Side by side with the official relations which liturgical worship establishes with God there are others of a private character. On the one hand we have the court of the heavenly King, and there we see the sacerdotal hierarchy (Pope, bishops and priests) which, in the midst of the multitude gathered together in the royal palace, that is, the Church, offers to the heavenly Father through Jesus Christ a public worship, the formulas and rites of which are authentically determined for the whole Church.

On the other hand, we have the private audience when subjects converse more familiarly with their monarch; or the popular reception which may be held anywhere and when each one has a word to say. Or again, the domestic hearth where the father receives with tenderness the confidences of his children. This unofficial form of prayer, whilst remaining more or less under the control of the spiritual guide,† at the same time allows greater freedom to souls in their personal intercourse with God.

Liturgical or public prayer is essentially social and must necessarily have an external form, since by it the Church as such, that is to say, as a visible society, addresses the Creator. And this prayer is

* *St. Aug. in Psalm.*, P.L. xxxvii, 1086.

† Confessor or director, spiritual books or exercises approved by the Church, indulgenced prayers, etc.

so grand just because it is truly the voice of the Bride.

Non-liturgical or private prayer is sometimes exterior, as the recitation of the rosary, prayers of confraternities, etc., or simply interior, as meditation and mental prayer. It may be made either in church or in the house. This prayer, which is also made by members of the mystical body of Jesus under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, has the advantage over liturgical prayer in that it carries out the command of the Master: "We ought always to pray and not to faint."*

Let us consider the relations between these two forms of prayer.

I

"There can be no advantage in making a jealous parallel between these two forms of Catholic prayer, or in making them stand apart in a kind of rivalry; we fail to see how they can either harm or exclude each other. Happy they who unite both in one common love! Let each keep its respective place in the practice and esteem of the children of the Church."†

"Liturgical prayer," says Dom Gréa, "is the most perfect homage that man can give to God on this earth; to take from it in any way is a public misfortune and its suppression is the extreme

* Luke xviii, 1.

† *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, by Madame Cécile Bruyère, Abbess of Solesmes, chap. x.

punishment with which God threatens cities: 'I will cause to cease (in this place) the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride' (Jerem. vii, 34), that is, the solemn colloquy of Jesus Christ and the Church."*

Liturgical prayer, ruled and directed by the sacred hierarchy, exercises a needful control over private prayer and prevents possible illusions which might spring from individual inspiration. It adds a greater breadth to private devotion, for the official worship of the Church is Christian prayer, in the etymological sense of the word, that is to say, it is prayer made by Christians assembled together under the leadership of a member of the Catholic hierarchy. "To make use of an external form in our interior prayer," writes Dom Beauduin, "brings us under the control of the Church and into contact with the whole multitude of the faithful."†

Liturgical prayer also helps the soul by suggesting formulas than which nothing could be better adapted to express her feelings towards the Most High. "When a soul borrows her expressions from human language, she will never find any words that more exactly convey the truths which she has contemplated than the forms of liturgical prayer, lending themselves, as they do, with equal ease to the lisps of a soul beginning to seek God and to the enraptured outpourings of a soul that has found Him."‡ What a joy it is to the soul, feeling her powerlessness to praise God whose greatness

* *Le Bréviaire romain: Introduction.*

† *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 79.

‡ *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, id.

she has realised in her prayer, to repeat at certain times the psalms, the prayers and holy lessons of the Church, for she knows that the voice of the Church is the voice of the Bride of Christ, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and always heard by God.

“The pure and loving soul,” says Bossuet, “finds therein, together with heavenly delights, a solid food and a constant renewal of fervour.”* We are well aware that in private sources the soul may find food for mental prayer; but it is no less true that the divine Office will ever be the principal and richest food of contemplation. . . . How can it be that a soul prepared and formed by the Holy Spirit (in the official worship) should not know better than any other how to converse with God in the intimacy of her heart, returning as she does to her solitude laden like a bee with honey from so many flowers? What is contemplation in its highest form but the opening out of the beautiful sayings which the prayer of the Church puts upon our lips?† Dom Beauduin, in his turn, remarks that “liturgical prayer, after having kept its disciples in intimate and vivifying contact with the priesthood of Jesus Christ, exercises a healthful influence over the interior activity of the soul which, in the silence of mental prayer, seeks after the closest union with God”‡; and in fact, adds Abbé Chipier, “just as material food, transformed into blood, circulates through all the members to renew them, so the spiritual food drunk in at the

* *Or. fun. de Marie-Thérèse.* † *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 75.

† *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, id.

divine Office passes into all the faculties, understanding, will, memory and imagination, refreshing them and giving them new life.”*

“We do not mean to say,” to quote Dom Gréa, “that the prayers of pious associations or of individual Christians have no share in the mystery of ecclesiastical communion ; the Church is whole and entire in each of its parts and animates all of them with her life, but they are under subjection to her in this life and only as far as they remain in this subjection can they receive graces.”†

To sum up,—private devotion finds in the liturgy an end peculiarly appropriate, the formulas in which it may best express itself and the source whence it may derive most abundant nourishment. In this sense, we may say that meditation receives its final perfection from the liturgy.

II

The liturgy in its turn is only perfect when it is mental as well as vocal prayer. Private prayer is indispensable to prepare the soul for the work of divine praise, to ensure its fitting accomplishment, and, during the day, to obtain from it all the helps to sanctity contained therein.

The public worship of the Church is an official school of sanctity. In this school, as in all others, the disciples must first go through their preparatory work ; then comes an effort to keep their attention

* *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 333. † *Le Bréviaire romain*, Preface.

fixed while the master teaches ; finally when the lesson is finished a time for revision follows, for reflection and synthesis. This is the threefold work of prayer.

(1) *Private Prayer in Preparation.*—"Before celebrating holy Mass (as also before assisting at it), before communicating or reciting the divine Office (or Vespers in the case of lay-folk) we should consider within ourselves the importance of these acts. Without such meditation it seems to be impossible to perform these liturgical functions with due appreciation and to avoid a certain inattention, so much to be deplored and so unfruitful in results where no effort is made to get rid of it."*

"The profit to be derived from the recitation of the divine Office depends on the preparation that has gone before, according to the words of the prophet: 'Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart' (Ps. ix, 42). No prayer will be perfect unless it has been preceded by meditation, as Hugh of St. Victor says in his treatise on prayer. All its fruit will depend on the preparation given to it."†

"In it the soul takes her attitude, as it were, prepares and drills herself to fulfil perfectly the four great ends of the sacrifice of praise ; in it, again, she tunes her instrument, so to say, that when the hour comes it may vibrate in perfect harmony to the glory of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost."‡

Preliminary study of the spirit of the different

* *Bréviaire et méditation*, id., p. 180.

† *Exercices spirituels*, de D. Garcias Cisneros, O.S.B., p. 307 (1549.)

‡ *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, chap. x.

liturgical seasons and also of the parts of the Mass which vary every day is indispensable, at least in the period of formation. Missal and breviary will, indeed, be fully understood only by those who have a certain acquaintance with Holy Scripture, sacred history, the lives of the Saints, and the history of the Church. In early times this knowledge was imparted in the Homily, and the Fathers deemed it necessary to the liturgical education of their people. Liturgical piety, far from being limited in its range, on the contrary necessitates the use of many books ancient and modern, as well as the concurrence of preaching and priestly influence if it is to be enlightened and well directed.*

For want of education in this sense "the greater part of the faithful at the present day are incapable of appreciating the beauty of the liturgy because they have no real love of Holy Scripture," writes Abbé Decrouille. "The early Christians were far better prepared to follow the divine Office with profit. Even among the people it was not rare to find men who knew the four Gospels almost by heart as well as the principal passages from the Epistles."†

"Sometimes, for instance, the Epistle is not completely intelligible without its context. Do not

* *Le Bulletin paroissial et liturgique*, edited by the Benedictine Fathers of the Abbey of St. André, publishes liturgical meditations for every month, an illustrated course of liturgy, liturgical and historical gleanings, and numerous explanations of the rites and ceremonies of the Church. It is ideal therefore, as a preparation for Mass and the divine office.

† *La Sainte Messe*, p. 35.

hesitate, especially on Sunday, to read the whole chapter from whence it is taken; you will find there spiritual treasures which will richly reward you for your trouble.”*

Formerly, too, all Christians knew the Psalms, for they heard them commented on and meditated on them during the Mass. The Introit, Gradual, Offertory and Communion being sung to an ornate and long drawn-out melody allow the soul to dwell at leisure on the thoughts and affections therein expressed. But this meditation will be truly profitable only if these Psalms have been studied beforehand. In the same way it is well to read the Gospel of the Mass in a Life of Christ so as to understand in what circumstances the event there related took place. If this has been done the Gospel will mean much more to us when we read it together with the priest.

“Evidently what many souls need is a missal with a commentary to explain it. This commentary exists, in a form which certainly is not the only possible one and, like all things human, it might be improved. However, it has been greatly relished by an immense number of readers and continues still in great demand: we refer to the *Liturgical Year* of the Abbot of Solesmes.”† There are other works besides which throw light on the treasures of the Missal.

The *Daily Missal, with Vespers for Sundays and Feasts*, that will be published in the course of 1924, and of which the French edition (*Missel quotidien*

* *La Sainte Messe*, p. 139.

† Dom. M. Festugière, *La liturgie catholique*, p. 106.

et Vespéral)* reached its one hundred and fifth thousand impression during its first two years of publication, is intended to supply this want. "The missal is for the greater part of the faithful a sealed book," says Monseigneur Charost, then bishop of Lille, in his Preface to the *Missel quotidien*; "few know anything of it, nor of the holy books from which it is taken. By your sober and lucid explanations you open out to them the fulness of its meaning. The attention given to Christian asceticism contributes to make assistance at Mass a true meditation. Too often this assistance is nothing more than the meeting together of the faithful and the priest. Yet if the soul has to prepare herself for prayer, must she not also prepare herself for Mass? Your book does this for the soul, so that it becomes easy for anyone who uses it to unite himself actively to the divine sacrifice. I bless therefore, and recommend most warmly this work which I cannot praise more highly than by calling it the book of catholic and parochial prayer."

The soul, then, must prepare for public prayer by meditation and private reading.

(2) *Private prayer during the time of liturgical prayer*.—We are too much inclined to think that to pray vocally is liturgical prayer and to pray mentally is meditation. "Open your breviary or missal," says Dom Festugière ironically, "begin to move your lips and to turn over the leaves; provided that you know the rubrics as a corporal

* Abbaye de St. André, par Lophem.

knows his drill, then you are an adept at ritual prayer.”* Doubtless the Church’s prayer is of such worth in itself that even when recited by those who do not understand Latin, it is heard by God; always supposing that such souls are filled with the spirit of prayer. For if mental prayer is not joined to the vocal prayer, this latter will be nothing more than a string of words such as a parrot or a phonograph could produce. It follows, then, that meditation as an exercise of the mind or the heart which, because it is mental, is ordinarily considered as a prayer distinct from the liturgy, far from being opposed to it, is on the contrary inseparable from it, for it is even an essential element of the same. The understanding and the will must therefore, during the Mass, work at the liturgical texts as they would work at a subject of meditation during their private prayer. All tradition is unanimous on this point; it teaches us that formerly after each Psalm a short pause was made for meditation. This silence has been replaced by the antiphons and the *Gloria Patri*. The prayers at the end of the office were likewise the conclusion of the meditation which had preceded them.†

* *La liturgie catholique*, p. 73.

† During this prayer which was made in silence the priest sang : *Oremus*, let us pray; the deacon sang : *Flectamus genua*, let us bend the knees; then prostrate and in silence the assembly prayed mentally; after a few minutes the deacon put an end to this prayer by the *Levate*, rise, and the priest said aloud a short formula which corresponded to the intention previously proposed. The *Pater*, of which only the first and last words are said aloud, the rest being recited in silence and bowing down, also brings to mind the meditation formerly made in this position or kneeling down.

“ We do not sing *at* the Mass, we sing the Mass,” said Pius X, when asked what might be sung during the holy Sacrifice. We should like to make the same answer to those who ask if they may meditate during the Mass : we do not meditate *at* Mass, we meditate *on* the Mass.

A Mass is, in fact, a collection of thoughts, praises, and prayers so arranged that the soul, in making them her own, brings all her faculties into play, as happens when she makes her prayer. The Church, guided by the Holy Spirit in her composition of the Masses, applies to them more or less the same laws as those which later on will be found directing the plans of meditations in the spiritual Exercises of the Benedictine Abbot Cisneros, of St. Ignatius, of St. Peter of Alcantara, of St. Francis of Sales, of Louis of Granada and others.

These methods tell us that we must prepare the subject of meditation the evening before. We have seen that the Mass also requires preparation, and how the Church invites us to make it on the preceding day, for the feast begins then with first Vespers.

Before entering into prayer we ought first to cleanse our souls. And so the High Mass begins with the sprinkling of holy water and the *Confiteor* and we ask God for pardon, absolution and remission of our sins.

Next we should place ourselves in the presence of God and form the intention of doing all for His glory. Did we not do this when we entered reverently into the church and knelt before the tabernacle, and when we made the words of the

celebrant our own as he declared, at the foot of the altar, that he took refuge with God who giveth joy to his youth, and again that, going up to the altar, he entered into the holy of holies? As the Mass proceeds both priest and faithful become more and more wrapped up in the thought of the divine presence. As for the intention of giving glory to God, this is expressed in the *Gloria in excelsis*, as it also was in the *aperi* which is said at the beginning of the divine Office.

Next we make a first prelude, the object of which is to arrest the wandering imagination: man, having a body, must, as we have already said, get his ideas from his sensations and must find a stimulant for his will in the impressions which come to him from without. This is called the composition of place. Now where could we find more perfect surroundings in which to relish the teachings of prayer than those in the midst of which holy Mass is celebrated? The church with its decorations, its stained glass, its architecture, the organ and the chant, the acclamations of joy or the accents of sorrow, the colours and richness of the vestments, the bells whose sound spreads far around, whilst in the sanctuary the priest and his ministers begin the sacred rites; the symbolism everywhere to be found,—in words, gestures, and even in the use of most ordinary things, such as water, salt, fire, light, incense, ashes; in this liturgical atmosphere there is nothing which does not appeal to man through one or other of his five senses in order to reach his soul and raise it to God.

“In these feasts,” says the Catechism of Pius X,

“all has been really well arranged and adapted in such a way to different circumstances—ceremonies, words, chant and every external action—as to cause the soul to enter most thoroughly into the mysteries and truths or the events celebrated and to produce corresponding acts and affections.”* To this must be added the special influence arising from the fact that all, both priest and people, have the selfsame prayer and chant upon their lips.

Afterwards there follows a second prelude in which the soul begs God to bless the meditation she is about to make and to grant her the special graces which she hopes to derive from this exercise.

The Collect or first prayer, with which the holy Sacrifice formerly began, contains precisely this petition. As a rule the Church herself determines day by day the particular graces to be asked for, corresponding to the mystery or to the feast which is being commemorated.

After these preambles, say the methods, begins the meditation properly so called, during which the understanding reflects on the subjects recalled by the memory or feeds itself with holy thoughts furnished by a book.

And after the Collect, the missal, that precious casket in which the Church has enclosed her most beautiful jewels, presents to us in the Epistle and, above all, in the Gospel, what St. Paul calls “the riches of all utterance and all knowledge with which we have been made rich in Christ Jesus.”† And we must keep in mind, as an Anglican clergyman recently declared, “that in the Catholic

* *App.* 11, No. 2.

† 1 Cor. i, 5.

liturgy, chiefly in the Missal and breviary, holy Scripture becomes luminous and quickening in its eloquence. Truly the liturgy is the synthetic and lyric expression of two most supernatural things—the Scriptures and the Church.”*

The Mass of the catechumens contains an admirable summary of the Old and New Testaments and of all tradition. Following the order of the feasts as they come round, it describes for us the whole life of Jesus Christ and of His saints, as well as all the truths we must believe. In the Introits, Graduals, Alleluia verses and Offertories we find words of praise taken from the Psalter, “that book of perfect beauty,” which, as Pius X said, “possesses a wonderful power of urging on souls to the love of every virtue.”† The Sequences are the most beautiful specimens of Christian poetry. The Homilies of the Fathers emphasise the teaching given in the Gospel of the Mass, and in many ways resemble a devout meditation. Finally the *Credo* sums up the whole of Catholic belief.

What a masterpiece is this first part of the Mass ! It is like a mosaic, all the parts of which blend harmoniously together.

There the Master Himself speaks and His apostles or His prophets echo His words, whilst the Church draws attention to them by placing them in the setting of her chants and ceremonies,

* Quoted by the R. Rev. Bishop D. Laurent Janssens, O.S.B., in his letter to the Rev. P. Ant. de Sérent which takes the place of a Preface to *La Méthode d'Oraison du Moyen-Age*.

† Bull *Divino afflatu*.

and even by the colour of her vestments which correspond to the various liturgical seasons.

At the season of Christmas the missal speaks to us only of the Saviour in His crib or in the mysteries of His childhood. During this time the celebrant is vested in white and the Gregorian melodies are expressive of joy. In the course of Lent the Missal is exclusively devoted to the life of Jesus in His apostolate and His Passion. The purple vestments and mournful chants singularly stress the thought of sorrow for sin which appears in all the liturgical formulas. At Easter the victory of Christ, at the Ascension the consummation of His triumph in heaven, at Pentecost the application of the fruits of this victory to our souls, all are successively meditated on in the missal, the Church's official book of meditation.

The missal also describes, one after the other, all the mysteries of the life of the Mother of God whose virginal purity is always symbolised by white vestments.

Then on the feasts of Apostles and Martyrs, who were the first to find a place in the Christian calendar, the missal sets itself to show us how they suffered and to unite the memory of their martyrdom to the sacrifice of Calvary which is mystically renewed on the altar. And here again the red of the vestments strikingly reminds us of the blood shed by these brave athletes for the name of Christ.

Every day the Church gives us the life of some saint in words taken from holy Scripture. With what persuasive power is the Gospel endowed when

thus exemplified by these generous souls who have put it in practice! For instance, on the feast of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, the Gospel recalls the words of our Lord: "Amen, I say to you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be cast into the sea, and shall not stagger in his heart, but believe that whatsoever he saith shall be done, it shall be done unto him." St. Gregory commanded a mountain to move in order to leave room for a church to be built, and his order was obeyed. On the feast of St. John Damascene, the Gospel tells of the man with a withered hand whom the Saviour cured in the synagogue. Now St. John Damascene was condemned by the Caliph of Damascus to have his right hand cut off, but God restored it to him by a miracle, and this holy doctor of the Church promised to use it henceforth only in writing of the praises of Mary.* Such examples could easily be multiplied.

Thus every morning our duties to God, our neighbour and ourselves are set before us for our consideration, in a way at once practical and theoretical.

"The Church, inspired by God and taught by the holy apostles, has so arranged the year," writes Bossuet, "that we find there, together with the life, mysteries, preaching and doctrine of Jesus Christ, the outcome of all these things in the marvellous virtues of His servants and in the examples of His saints. There, too, we have a mysterious summary of the Old and New Testaments and of

* *Missal*, November 17 and March 27.

the whole history of the Church. By this means all seasons bear fruit for Christians; they are all full of Jesus Christ who is always wonderful, as the Prophet says, not only in Himself but in His saints also.”* “The Church knew her children well,” remarks Dom Beauduin in the same strain, “when in all her liturgical books, with an astonishing profusion and prodigality, she heaped up treasures which never pall and can never be exhausted. Each Mass in the Missal is like a vein of gold, so to speak, running just below the surface of the soil; with very little effort it can be dug out and made to yield great profit.”†

How few there are, even among pious people, who appreciate the treasures contained in this book, at once so little and so great. They are ignorant of the exquisite order which has presided over its composition and have no inkling of the wonderful harmony that exists not only between all the Masses in the course of the year but even between the different parts of the Mass of each day. Between the Epistle and Gospel,‡ and often, too, between the Introit, Collect, Offertory and Communion some connection has been purposely set up by the Church. This has been done in such a way that the multiplicity of these texts, far from being a hindrance to meditation, is of great assistance,

* *Or. fun. de Marie-Thérèse.*

† *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 78.

‡ During Lent this connection is striking. See, for instance, the Epistle and Gospel of Saturday in the second week, of Monday and Thursday in the third week, etc.

because the daily liturgy may be reduced to a few leading thoughts, frequently repeated under different forms, and so we are led quite naturally to dwell upon them.

The Introit, Offertory and Communion were formerly followed by the singing of an entire Psalm and these antiphons gave the key to its interpretation according to the feast that was celebrated. The Introit is often reproduced in the Gradual which, in its turn, is, as a general rule, a commentary on the Epistle and Gospel, serving as a bond of union between them, as well by its meaning as by the place it occupies between the one and the other. For example, on January 25, feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, the Epistle gives the story of this miracle from the Acts of the Apostles. The Gradual speaks of the grace which made the apostle the doctor of the Gentiles and did not remain void in his soul. Therefore, continues the Alleluia, St. Paul is worthy of glory, for he deserved to possess the twelfth throne. In the Gospel our Lord declares: Blessed are the apostles who have followed Him, for they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The feast of the Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary, on February 2, has, for Epistle, a passage from the prophet Malachy, announcing the coming of the Messias into the Temple. In the Gradual, taken from the forty-seventh Psalm, we sing that we have received the mercy of God in the midst of His temple and the alleluia applies this passage to the child Jesus whom Simeon carried in his arms. The Gospel which follows relates

the fact of the Presentation in the Temple, as told by St. Luke. Thus by means of the Gradual and Alleluia we easily perceive the relation between the Epistle and the Gospel; the former as a prophecy which is fulfilled in the latter.

In both these Masses the Prayer, often the key to the whole liturgy of the day, is in sympathy with the teaching of the Epistle and Gospel, for it applies this teaching to our souls. St. Paul was converted, says one; grant, O Lord, that we may imitate him. Jesus was presented in the Temple, says the other; may we, too, be presented there with clean hearts.

To give another example: on the feast of St. Peter's Chains (August 1) the Collect recalls the deliverance of the prince of the Apostles and asks that we may be delivered from the bonds of sin. On the feast of St. Raymund of Pennafort the Collect says that this saint wrote on the Sacrament of Penance and miraculously crossed an arm of the sea and asks that we may bring forth worthy fruits of penance and so reach the haven of eternal salvation.

Every day we should study the different parts of the Mass, so that one may throw light on another. And this exercise of the understanding must prepare for and precede that of the will, which is the end and object of all meditation. It must always conclude with affections and resolutions which will help us to put in practice what we have seen to be right and will make us ready to endure for God's sake labours, trials and sacrifices.

“In prayer,” says Bourdaloue, “the mind must act only through the heart.”* Here again the liturgy is an excellent guide, for in it reading always ends with praise of God or prayer.

Those who have prescribed methods of prayer tell us that all considerations must tend to prayer, thanksgiving, offering of ourselves, to union with God and to petition. Does not the Mass realise this programme perfectly? In the first part of the Mass the soul is cleansed and enlightened; during the Mass of the faithful she offers herself at the Offertory, gives thanks at the Preface, sacrifices herself with our Lord at the Consecration and closely unites herself to Him in the Communion. And the Church concludes this great act by the official thanksgiving which begins with the Post-communion.

Here we may notice how the Church, in order to impress her thoughts upon our minds, delights to repeat the same formulas as at the *Kyrie*, the *Sanctus*, the *Agnus Dei* and the *Domine non sum dignus*.

The cycle of the Masses for the year, provided for us by the Missal, constitutes, therefore, a series of spiritual exercises drawn up on a plan which takes into account all the needs of the human soul. If we faithfully follow this well ordered series of feasts with their vigils and octaves, which prolong and thus intensify them, we shall find ourselves carried, in the course of the year, through the exercises of what spiritual writers call the purgative

* *Lettre à Madame de Maintenon*. Lauras, t. II, p. 609.

life (Advent and Lent), the illuminative, and the unitive life (Christmas, Easter).

Each Mass forms a meditation ready made, in which the Church applies, without putting them into words, the processes according to which the understanding and will function; and this she does in such a way that to go through this meditation for oneself, interiorly adapting oneself to the sacred text and following the order laid down in Missal or Breviary, suffices to bring all the intellectual and even sensible faculties into play and provides each in turn with work befitting its nature. They are like a number of workmen, all concentrated on one piece of work, each having his special function but all helping to weave the one precious stuff with which the soul clothes herself that she may please God. Thus the liturgy makes use of a method very well thought out and very safe, but the laws of which are so natural that they are imperceptible to many.

The Missal is, therefore, the most ancient of meditation books, the most complete and the most perfect. "In the sacred liturgy the children of the Church have all the science of their Mother, for that liturgy contains the most perfect method of prayer, the most traditional, the best ordered, the most simple and the one which leaves the greatest scope to the liberty of the Holy Spirit."* "Doctrine and method are not enough to secure to us a real grasp of truth; grace is also necessary. Now the liturgy, because it is an act of worship performed

* *Spiritual Life and Prayer*, chap. ix.

by the Church as such, is of its nature sanctifying. The truth is transformed into adoration and prayer and is laden with graces.”*

(3) *Private Prayer*.—When the Mass is over the meditation should continue during the whole day. There should be no water-tight partition between the prayer of the Church and our private devotion. Ritual worship is not only a part of the direct service of God, but it is also concerned with our supernatural profit. And so our meditation on the Mass ought to prove for the next twenty-four hours a fertile source of divine energy which will sustain us in the midst of our trials, for they will thus be united to the sacrifice of the altar and to that of Calvary. Every year at the same periods the life of Christ and of His Saints is set before us as a pattern for our imitation, and the contact between these souls and ours, kept up in this way for ten, thirty, sixty times in the course of life, sanctifies us always more and more.

“There are souls who live all day on the collects and other prayers of the Church which they have sung or heard in the morning; or on the office which they sing or recite. Oh! what a simple and excellent method! Such souls will pass quite naturally from the liturgy of earth to that of heaven.”†

The impression left by a liturgical feast may be for a holy soul the starting-point of a higher state of prayer, for the worship of the Church is apt

* *Quest. Lit.* 1913. *Noël*, p. 91.

† Ch. Sauvé, *Les litanies du S. Cœur*, 31^e élévation.

“to lead souls even to the threshold of the mystical state, even to that prayer of union which supervenes when lower degrees of religious activity have disappeared.”*

The Bride herself leads these privileged souls to the Bridegroom. Thus St. Benedict declares in the fifty-second chapter of his Rule that “when the work of God is ended, if anyone desire to pray in private let him go quietly and pray, not with a loud voice but with tears and fervour of heart”; and Cassian says that “to the Canonical Vigils there are added private watchings, in order that the purity which has been gained by Psalms and prayers may not be lost.”†

The words quoted above can also be applied to souls whom God does not call to these heights of Christian sanctity, for the spiritual life in all its degrees is provided for by the Church. “Who will deny,” writes Dom Ryelandt, “that it is most fitting for the children of the Church to make use of the liturgy for their personal needs,”‡ and not to leave on one side in their private meditation the substantial food that this Mother prepares for us each day in her *spiritual exercises* or authentic formulas of her worship. If we bring our life of prayer into harmony with that of the Bride of Christ in her churches, our individual prayer becomes a conversation with God in which the Church herself serves as intermediary. “This

* *La liturgie catholique*, p. 87.

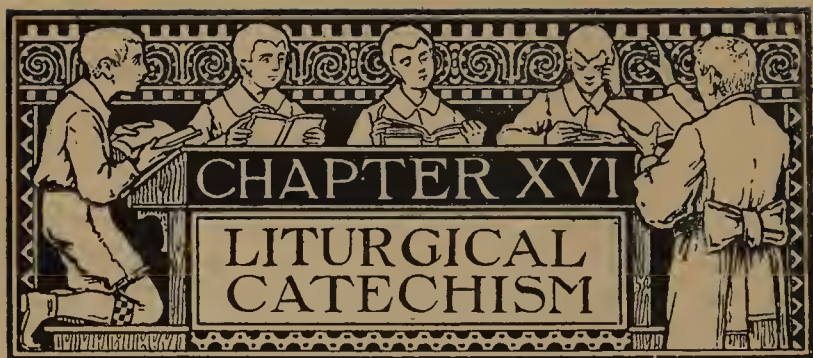
† *Inst.*, lib. ii, ch. 13.

‡ *Semaine liturgique*, p. 177.

liturgical piety is homogeneous: worship and meditation afford each other mutual support.”* Here we have one of the most powerful motives which make the liturgy the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

* *La piété de l'Eglise*, p. 78. In a remarkable article contributed to *Etudes* (June 20, 1922) entitled: *Bulletin de liturgie pratique*, Père Doncœur, S.J., brings out very clearly how the liturgy gives unity to the spiritual life.





IN the Bull *Acerbo nimis*, published on April 15, 1905, during the second year of his pontificate, Pius X wrote that "God had called him to exercise the office of supreme Pastor over the flock of Christ in very grievous and difficult times, for now more than ever the prediction of St. Paul to the Ephesians was realised: "I know that after my departure ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock."* And analysing the different causes which contributed to the weakening of religious ideas among Christians, he said that the present state of slackness and lack of strength in souls, with all those evils which follow in such circumstances, must be attributed chiefly to ignorance of the things of God. "There is no knowledge of God in the land," said the prophet Osee; "cursing and lying and killing and theft and adultery have overflowed: and blood hath touched blood. Therefore shall the land mourn and every one that dwelleth in it shall languish."† Repeating what Benedict XIV had said, he continued: "We

* Acts xx, 29.

† Osee iv, 1-3.

are of opinion that a great part of those who are condemned to eternal torments owe this irreparable misfortune to their ignorance of the mysteries of faith which must of necessity be known and believed by those who would be counted in the fold of the elect." The first duty of all who take part in the government of the Church in any way whatever will be to teach the faithful the sacred truths. "Most certainly," continues the Pope, "the pity shown to the poor in relieving their distress is worthy of great praise before God; but who will deny that they gain far more merit who expend their zeal and labour in procuring not merely passing comforts for the body but eternal happiness for souls, by instructing and exhorting them?" No! nothing could be more pleasing to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of souls, who said of Himself by the mouth of Isaias: "He hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor."*

Pius X adds, with the holy Council of Trent,† that "this teaching should be given in a twofold form: firstly, in the sermons on Sundays and festivals, in explanation of the Gospel, for then bread is given to full-grown men and women, and secondly in the catechism, when the rudiments of faith are taught and milk is given to the children. Without prejudice, then, to the ordinary homily on the Gospel, which should be given on all festivals at the parochial Mass, rectors and other priests having the care of souls shall catechise the

* Isaias lxi, 1, and Luke iv, 18.

† Sess. v, *de Reformatione*, cap. 2; sess. xxiv, *de Ref.*, cap. 4 et 7.

faithful, using for this purpose the Catechism of Trent."

The source from whence springs Christian truth by which souls are to be saved is, then, normally, twofold: on the one hand, the homily on the Gospel, on the other the Catechism. The two complete each other, and so, in their Preface, the authors of the Catechism of Trent write that it is a good thing to direct the explanation of each Sunday's Gospel to one of the four principal subjects which form the groundwork of the Catechism, namely: the Apostles' Creed, the Sacraments, the ten Commandments and the Lord's prayer. "For example, if the Gospel of the first Sunday in Advent is to be explained, 'There shall be signs in the sun and in the moon,' etc., what appertains to its explanation is contained under the article of the Creed, 'He shall come to judge the living and the dead.'"* These theologians, under the guidance of St. Charles Borromeo, drew up a scheme for all Sundays and festivals throughout the year, giving the chapters of the Catechism corresponding to the Gospels which the Church appoints to be read. "By this means," they add, "the faithful will be instructed at the same time in the Creed and the Gospel."

The Catechism of Cambrai tells us that "we learn what Jesus Christ Himself has taught in the Catechism and in the instructions given in the church."

This twofold method is necessary. In the sermon much teaching from the Holy Scriptures and

* *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, preface and appendix.

tradition is given. The sermon is preached after the Gospel according to a very ancient custom which goes back probably to the time of the Apostles, for it is spoken of by St. Justin. We need only say that its object is, normally, to explain what has just been read. "The one who presided over the assembly read a passage from the Pentateuch, and another from the Prophets. These readings from the Scriptures were followed by a discourse in which the speaker explained the sacred text."* Bossuet says that "one of the principal ends which the Church sets before herself in the institution of feasts is the instruction of the faithful. The solemnities occur at different times in order that we may thereby learn what God has deigned to do for our salvation, and what we must do to lay hold of it. Indeed, if Christians did nothing more than enter into the spirit of the Church's feasts, they would know everything they ought to know, since they would find there both instruction and example."†

This is so true that we find the Church has always employed her liturgy as a powerful instrument against heretics. The Pelagian heresy in particular was crushed by the liturgy, as Bossuet and Fénelon have told us. St. Augustine says: "Would that the dull of heart and those who are weak in faith and unable to understand the Scriptures would leave aside our disputations, that they may attend the better to those prayers which the

* *Le Prône et la Liturgie*, Revue Bénédictine, No. 3, March, 1890. Dom Ursmer Berlière, O.S.B.

† Preface to his *Catéchisme des fêtes*.

Church had from the beginning and will keep to the end of the world.”* The Catholic faith is taught not only by the prayers of the Church but also by her rites which are a visible commentary on the faith.

Truly we have there a catechism in pictures, a catechism illustrated from real life, for our Lord and the Saints by their example and virtue emphasise the theoretical teaching we have received and by their intercession gain for us the strength to do as they have done. “Is there a chapter of the catechism,” writes P. Lansoy, “which does not find expression in the liturgy, whether there is question of God, of His perfections, of the homage which is due to Him, of sin and its expiation, of the Incarnation and Redemption, of how to profit by these mysteries; of prayer and its efficacy, through the merits of Jesus Christ and by the intercession of Mary and the Saints.”†

“The value of the liturgy as a means of instruction, its power in the teaching of our holy religion, the reasons of this power, may be summed up under three heads,” writes Dom Maur Grégoire, then professor of liturgy in the seminary of Tournai, “the charm exercised by the beauty and the poetry of the liturgical chants, of the ceremonies and of the churches; the suggestive eloquence of the avowal of our beliefs contained in the yearly round of liturgical festivals, and lastly the instructive language of the rites—a language addressed to the senses. In all these ways the liturgy invests the

* *De dono perseverantiæ*, cap. xxiii.

† *La sainte famille*. January, 1921, pp. 17-21.

truths of religion with powerful attractions which captivate the imagination and warm the heart, thus singularly quickening the convictions of the mind. By this means we make progress in supernatural truths, not certainly by the methods of speculative reason which probes into dogma and never rests content with what it knows, but the whole soul is led to live by the truth. If this be the case we must admit, not only that the liturgy offers precious opportunities for and remarkable contributions to the teaching of religion, but that its method of teaching is the best, that it is morally necessary for all who are not practised in abstraction, that is to say, for the immense majority of mankind. We must also disavow the statement sometimes made, that a knowledge of the liturgy is unnecessary, a luxury, to be given to the faithful last of all, if there is time.”*

But just as the direct and practical teaching of a language does not dispense us from the study of its grammar, so neither has the liturgy any pretension of taking the place of the catechism. It is, indeed, important that the truths of religion should be presented to the mind in a certain order which is not found in the liturgical cycle. A systematic development throws light on special points, favours particular deductions and makes it easier to answer objections. The authors of the Catechism of Trent say : “ It is no easy task to acquire a knowledge of things divinely revealed (and the liturgy contains much that is so revealed), or having acquired it to

* *Semaine liturgique de Maredsous*, August, 1912 : *Contributions qu'offre la liturgie à l'enseignement de la religion*, p. 144.

retain it in the memory so as to be ready to give an explanation when occasion may require. Therefore our predecessors have very wisely reduced the whole scheme of saving doctrine to four distinct heads.”* These four heads are the great divisions of the Catechism of Trent, a work of which Cardinal Valère, bishop of Verona, wrote: “One cannot believe that it was written by the hand of man; rather it is our holy Mother, the Church, guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit, who herself speaks to us and instructs us. It is a book drawn up by order of the Council of Trent, and, so to say, under the dictation of the Holy Ghost.” Thus Leo XIII, in his encyclical of September 8, 1899, called it “a golden book.”

The missal, too, has been drawn up by the Church, and, so to say, under the dictation of the Holy Ghost; it, too, deserves to be called a golden book. The Catechism and the missal explain each other and, together, ought to enlighten our minds and enkindle our hearts.

* * * * *

How close a union there has always been between the catechism and the liturgy tradition clearly proves. Let us examine what are the earliest traces to be found of the catechism.

The familiar verbal teaching of the fundamental truths of religion, says Dom de Puniet,† was not left, after the time of the Apostles, to the initiative of any chance individual, but was disciplined and regulated, if not by a written text, at least by an

* Preface to Catechism of Trent.

† *Dictionnaire archéologique*, on the word *Catéchumènes*.

official elementary teaching. The existence of this teaching is so evident and so well attested that, although the manual itself is lacking, we can be absolutely certain as to what was taught on some points.

This teaching bore the name of *katechesis*, from the verb which signifies properly "to resound" and figuratively "to instruct orally," hence evoking the idea of question and answer. The Latin fathers used the word *catechesis* to mean either the act of teaching, or the teaching itself or its object. Very soon the name was applied to the one who taught—catechist; to the one who is taught—catechumen; and to the institution which sprang from these mutual conversations—catechumenate.

Several passages of the New Testament clearly allude to an apostolic teaching. The converts of the day of Pentecost persevered, we are told, in *the* doctrine of the Apostles. The use of the definite article shows us that there is question here of a definite doctrinal formulary. St. Paul, in his epistle to Titus, reminds him that he is bound to teach according to this doctrine—*kata tēn didachen*.*

We may therefore admit the existence of an oral apostolic teaching parallel to the written teaching preserved in the Gospels. The custom of teaching orally was established in Palestine in all the Jewish schools. The master recited a sentence, recalled the commentaries given by the doctors and developed his own personal explanation. These sentences were handed down for more than two centuries before they were committed to writing.

* Titus. i, 9, and ii, 1.

The Apostles must have had to conform to a national custom. Using by preference the words of Jesus, the repetition of these words would soon give a fixed character to their dogmatic teaching. It was the same as regards their moral teaching. Thus a type of preaching was set up as a model and an example that each might appropriate or assimilate by dint of repeating the same instructions or of hearing them repeated. That the faithful strove to retain the words as well as the thoughts is apparent from the writings of St. Clement and of St. Irenæus. Parallel with the written type preserved for us in the Gospel would be the oral type as given in the *Didache*.

This teaching was written down in the period immediately following the time of the Apostles. Indeed, there appeared during this period a little work in Greek which was entitled the *Didache* (teaching) of the twelve Apostles. This booklet is made up of different fragments of the apostolic preaching preserved at first by oral tradition.

The Gospel relates the life of Jesus Christ and sets down His discourses, thus teaching not only history but also—though in an informal way—dogma and morals. On the other hand the *Didache* of the Apostles contains the precepts of the rule of life in systematic order, in the form of a manual of religion. The apostolic catechism enumerates the virtues and the vices : To practise virtue is to walk in the way of life ; to give oneself to vice is to run in the way of death. This catechism is concerned exclusively with moral precepts and says nothing explicitly about what

we must believe. It may be taken as an example of the teaching addressed to catechumens in preparation for their baptism. In the sixth century St. Benedict puts into his holy Rule some maxims taken from this book.* At the beginning of the eighth century we see this catechism “of the two ways” still in use, even on the banks of the Rhine.

To this instruction in morals must be added the much shorter and more condensed doctrinal teaching brought together and contained in the symbol. The symbol or Creed of the Apostles as it is called goes back to about the same date as the Didache, that is to say, about the year 100. The terms in which it is drawn up are borrowed from the language of the Apostles or of their immediate successors. It belongs to the sub-apostolic age.

For the catechumen the *Credo* was like a secret pledge of orthodoxy, a password, the transmission of which formed part of his preparation for baptism. It was delivered to the catechumens not in writing but orally, and when they had received it from the bishop they had to learn it by heart. The catechetical teaching is based, therefore, on a formulary of faith of which the essential features are to be found in the Roman *Credo*.

To the Two Ways and the *Credo*, which represent all that remains to us of the catechetical subject-matter of the first two centuries, we should add the *Pater*, its recitation being imposed on the baptised, as we might conclude from certain passages of St. Paul.†

* Chap. iv: Of the instruments of good works.

† Rom. viii, 15; Gal. iv, 6; 1 Cor. x, 2-4.

We have here the plan of the actual catechism, which explains the Creed, the Commandments of God and the Church and the means (grace and prayer) of putting in practice this twofold teaching, doctrinal and moral.

* * * * *

How was this teaching given? At Alexandria there was, from the very beginning of Christianity, a celebrated catechetical school with regularly organised instructions. This school, a real ecclesiastical institution, was placed under the authority of the bishop. The teaching of the catechism was entrusted to one person, a learned man being appointed to help him and take his place at need. This latter usually succeeded to the office.

St. Cyril at Jerusalem, St. John Chrysostom at Antioch, St. Augustine at Hippo, each fulfilled before their episcopate the duties of the catechist, that is to say, they were entrusted with that part of the teaching which was given as an immediate preparation for baptism.

This doctrinal and moral teaching was not reserved for any definite time; it was distributed over the whole year with the object of preparing those who heard it for the solemn baptismal initiations. The logical consequence of this system was the formation of groups according to the amount of instruction received, which of course depended on the time they had already spent in their preparation.

We possess manuals, intended for the instruction of those who had to catechise, drawn up by St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine, but the most

explicit of all is that of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (fourth century). This church exercised particular vigilance over its catechumens. The catechism of this saint comprises eighteen instructions addressed to the catechumens admitted to receive baptism at Easter, and five which were given to them after their initiation. The examination of candidates took place on the first Sunday of Lent (with the Latins on the third or fourth Sunday). On the morrow the catechetical instructions commenced and continued every day for seven weeks, being given between Prime and Terce, that is, for three hours, from six to nine o'clock in the morning except on Saturday and Sunday. The instructions related to Holy Scripture, from Genesis onwards, in its literal and spiritual sense. The sixth and seventh weeks were devoted to the explanation of the *Credo*, article by article. On Palm Sunday took place the handing over (*redditio* or *traditio*) of the symbol. After the baptism, during the eight days after Easter, the newly baptised received further teaching on the mysteries into which they had been initiated—baptism, confirmation and the eucharist. They were also told what kind of lives they must lead if they would enjoy the life that is eternal.

In the ninth century Rabanus Maurus, disciple of Alcuin, wrote a book pointing out the method to be followed in the instruction of pagans who asked to receive baptism. In it he speaks of the symbol, of the Lord's prayer, of virtues to be practised and of vices to be avoided. It is a very detailed treatment of the *Pater*, of the *Two Ways*

and of the *Didache*, that is, of the primitive catechism.

The catechumens were allowed to be present at the first part of the eucharistic synaxis until the end of the homily. This is the reason of the choice of lessons at Matins of Septuagesima and Lent and also of the name given to this part of the Mass, *Missa* (or dismissal) of the catechumens. During this pre-Mass, after the Collect and before the readings from Scripture, on the third Wednesday in Lent certain rites were gone through, namely the breathing over the catechumens with the sign of the cross, the laying on of hands and the recital of the *Pater* and the *Credo* and finally, on Holy Saturday, the exorcism, the Ephpheta, the renouncing of Satan, the anointing and the giving of the symbol. All these rites are put together in the present ritual for baptism, and in the Masses of the Paschal Octave are still to be found certain truths that were announced to the catechumens on the days following their baptism. It is clear that, for the Church, the catechism and the liturgy are bound up together.

The liturgy, full as it is of the most essential and most solid principles both dogmatic and moral, is therefore the people's catechism, for when children have left school their Mother the Church can reach them, generally speaking, only through her worship and by means of the sermons which throw light on the teaching there given. And if the children leave the Catechism class knowing nothing at all of the liturgy and therefore not appreciating it, the priest has scarcely any chance of seeing them persevere for long in coming to

church ; when they are grown up they get weary of it, for they have never been initiated into what goes on there. So they slip away and perhaps not until they are on their death-bed will the priest find them again and try to awaken in their hearts that spark of faith put into them on the school benches but prevented from developing as it should on the benches of the church.

* * * * *

We will conclude this chapter with two extracts :*

“ Catholic teaching is too often limited to formulas. The scholar is expected to retain it exactly in his memory but his understanding is rarely touched, and still more rarely is his will roused to follow after good. To remedy this we should put more life into our teaching by bringing it into contact with the substance of the prayers and rites of the Sacraments. The child will find in the hymns and prayers a magnificent summary of our great dogmas. Moreover they will carry with them the charm of beautiful literature and the delightful remembrance of feasts at which he has assisted. If the sacraments, in their turn, are explained by means of their rites the pupil will at last understand what is the outward sign of an inward grace. Having grasped this he will be formed to the practice of a visible religion by a visible Church, that is to say, he will be a true Catholic.”†

* We think it well to quote the very words of the authors, for “ Catholic Liturgy ” is not only intended to initiate but also to inform.

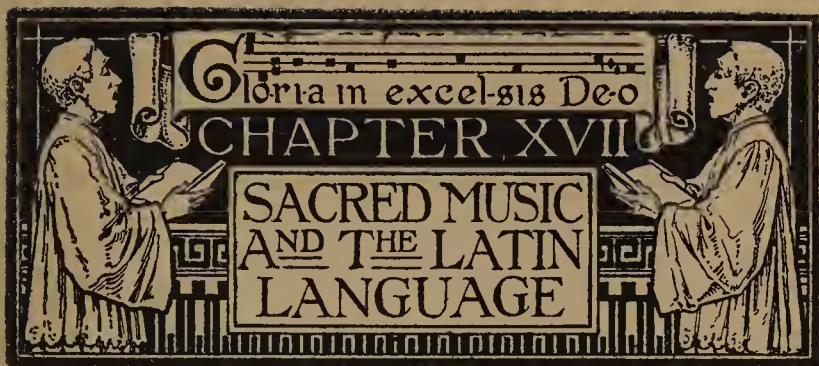
† M. Baelen : *Revue de l'Enseignement Chrétien*, 1910.

“The liturgical year brings about a twofold growth in the mind of man—the increase of knowledge of the truths of faith and the development of the supernatural life. Every single point of Christian doctrine is not only brought forward in the course of the year but inculcated with that authority and unction wherewith our holy Mother the Church has so deeply impregnated her words and her eloquent rites. The faith of the believer is thus enlightened more and more each year: the theological sense is formed in him; prayer leads him to science. There must needs be great progress in a Christian soul when the object of faith is ever gaining greater light, when the hope of salvation is almost forced upon her by the sight of all those wonders which God’s goodness has wrought for His creatures: and when charity is enkindled within her under the breath of the Holy Ghost, who has made the liturgy to be the centre of his working in men’s souls.”*

Because the liturgy is thus a popular catechism it is also “the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.”

* Dom Guéranger: *Preface to the Liturgical year.*





(I) SACRED MUSIC

IN his *Motu proprio* on Sacred Music Pius X said that the liturgy is “the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.” We cannot therefore omit to speak of the ecclesiastical chant, and we will endeavour to show how, with its aid, the worship of the Church gives greater glory to God and wins more abundant grace for souls.

“Among the cares of the pastoral office, not only of this Supreme Chair, but of every local church, a leading one is that of maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God in which the august mysteries of religion are celebrated, and where the Christian people assemble to receive the grace of the Sacraments, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the altar, to adore the most august Sacrament of the Lord’s Body, and to unite in the common prayer of the Church in the public and solemn liturgical offices. Nothing should have place, therefore, in the temple calculated to disturb or even merely to diminish the piety and devotion of the faithful; nothing that may give reasonable

cause for disgust or scandal ; nothing, above all, which directly offends the decorum and the sanctity of the sacred functions, and is thus unworthy of the House of Prayer and of the Majesty of God.”*

Our Lord began His public life by driving the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, and Pope Pius X, consumed with zeal for the house of God, as was our divine Saviour, inaugurated his pontificate by banishing from our churches those who sang unbecoming music! “We consider it our first duty to raise our voice in reproof and condemnation of all that is seen to be out of harmony with the right rule above indicated, in the functions of public worship and in the performance of the ecclesiastical offices.

“We deem it necessary to provide before aught else for the sanctity and dignity of the temple, in which the faithful assemble for no other object than that of acquiring this spirit from its primary and indispensable source, which is the active participation in the most holy mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church.

“And it is vain to hope that the blessing of heaven will descend abundantly upon us, when our homage to the Most High, instead of ascending in the odour of sweetness, puts into the hand of the Lord the scourges wherewith of old the Divine Redeemer drove the unworthy profaners from the Temple.”†

And the Holy Father remarks that “one of the most common abuses and the most difficult to

* *Motu proprio* on sacred music (November 22, 1903).

† *Id., ibid.*

eradicate," in matters concerning divine worship is "that affecting sacred chant and music. And indeed, whether it is owing to the very nature of this art, fluctuating and variable as it is in itself, or to the succeeding changes in tastes and habits with the course of time, or to the fatal influence exercised on sacred art by profane and theatrical art, or to the pleasure that music directly produces, and that is not always easily contained within the right limits, or finally to the many prejudices on the matter, so lightly introduced and so tenaciously maintained even among responsible and pious persons, the fact remains that there is a general tendency to deviate from the right rule, prescribed by the end for which art is admitted to the service of public worship and which is set forth very clearly in the ecclesiastical Canons."*

He goes on to say that "sacred music should possess in the highest degree the qualities proper to the liturgy, and precisely *sanctity* and *goodness of form*, from which its other character of *universality* spontaneously springs. It must be *holy*, and must therefore exclude all profanity not only in itself, but in the manner in which it is presented by those who execute it. It must be *true art*, for otherwise it will be impossible to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds. But it must, at the same time, be universal in the sense that while every nation is permitted to use its native music, still these forms must be so subordinated to the

* *Id.*, *ibid.*

characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them.

“These qualities,” he explains, “are to be found, in the highest degree, in the Gregorian chant, which is, consequently, the chant proper to the Roman Church, the only chant she has inherited from the ancient fathers, which she has jealously guarded for centuries in her liturgical codices, which she directly proposes to the faithful as her own, which she prescribes exclusively for some parts of the liturgy, and which the most recent studies have so happily restored to their integrity and purity.

“On these grounds the Gregorian chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is fully legitimate to lay down the following rule: the more closely a composition for church use approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy is it of the temple. ✕

“The ancient traditional Gregorian chant must, therefore, be largely restored to the function of public worship and everybody must take for certain that an ecclesiastical function loses nothing of its solemnity when it is accompanied by no other music but this. Special efforts are to be made to restore the use of Gregorian chant by the people, so that the faithful may again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices, as was the case in ancient times.

“The above-mentioned qualities are also pos-

sessed in an excellent degree by the classic polyphony, especially of the Roman school, which reached its greatest perfection in the fifteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina.* The classic polyphony agrees admirably with Gregorian chant, and hence it has been found worthy of a place side by side with the Gregorian chant in the more solemn functions of the Church, such as those of the Pontifical Chapel. ✱

“The Church has always recognised and favoured the progress of the Arts, admitting to the service of worship everything good and beautiful discovered by genius in the course of ages—always, however, with due regard for the liturgical laws. Consequently, modern music is also admitted in the Church, since it too furnishes compositions of such excellence, sobriety and gravity, that they are in no way unworthy of the liturgical functions.”†

The *Motu proprio* is extensive in its scope; all music which is at the same time sacred, beautiful and universal is allowed in church.

These qualities are found, writes Abbé Delporte :

* On the occasion of the inauguration of the monument to Pierluigi at Palestrina, October 2, 1921, His Holiness Benedict XV wrote: “The interest taken by us in the celebration of this festival should help to enkindle more and more that zeal for the restoration of sacred music so happily undertaken by our predecessor of venerated memory which has not ceased to spread with ever increasing vigour throughout the Catholic world. We do not desire that time should weaken the efficacy of those wise rules, drawn up by the same Pontiff in the *Motu proprio* of November 22, 1903, and issued by him as the juridical code of sacred music; we wish that they should retain their full force especially in regard to Palestrinian music.”

† *Motu proprio* on sacred music, November 22, 1903.

“In the highest degree in Gregorian chant—the music *imposed*.

“In an excellent degree in Palestrinian music, which is *recommended*.

“In a sufficient degree in some modern music, and this music is *authorised*.”* ✱

Always and before all comes the plain chant, which is the consummation and crown of the art of music, whether Jewish, Greek or Roman. It contains in itself all the musical tradition of both synagogue and Church. The official books of Gregorian chant have preserved for us melodies of a tonality analogous to those that Christ and His apostles sang, which were used by Christians from the earliest times.

Benedict XIV could therefore truly say: “Plain chant is the chant of the Church.” It is called Gregorian chant, because the honour of having collected and published these devout melodies belongs to St. Gregory the Great, the first Benedictine Pope, and his name has ever been given to them. In the manuscript Antiphoner preserved in the library of St. Gall, numbered 390, this Pope is represented dictating neums to his secretary, whilst a dove, symbol of the Holy Ghost, directs him in his work.

From Rome the Gregorian Antiphoner gradually spread throughout the world. “When St. Augustine and his forty-nine monks landed in the Isle of Thanet and set foot on British soil, they delighted the barbarians whom they had come to evangelise

* Conference given in the church of St. Christopher at Tourcoing, 1918.

by singing the Gregorian chant. St. Boniface, in his turn, caused it to flourish in his monasteries in Hesse and Thuringia. And it contributed largely to soften the savage manners of the German peoples who in time asked to be baptised. Our fathers, thorough Christians as they were, when they sang of the mysteries of their religion, never used any other than these melodies, so sweet and fragrant with the odour of sanctity."

Charlemagne favoured its expansion throughout France, where numerous *Scholæ Cantorum* rivalled each other in influence. "The beauty of these venerable melodies," writes Dom Guéranger, "had so greatly charmed the ears of Charlemagne that, in concert with the Roman Pontiffs, he made use of the chant as one of the most powerful instruments for the civilisation of his vast empire."*

"Man thirsts for poetry," writes Canon Moisenet, "but though all can appreciate it, few can produce it and so men seek for one who can offer it to them ready made. Now the Church has offered them the sublime poetry of the Liturgy. That is why the monastic centres and great pontifical functions have done a work in the conquest of nations to the faith no less effective than that of preaching, and the Church, when able to do as she wished, has always attached the greatest importance to the keeping alive of this element, as capable of preserving the faith as it is of producing it."†

Pius X reminds us of what we already know,

* *Institutions liturgiques*, t. ii, p. 429.

† *L'enseignement du chant sacré*, p. 25.

when he says in his *Motu proprio* that the chant is an "integral part" of divine worship, that those who sing it have a "true liturgical office," so much so that without the chant the liturgy is mutilated and is no longer an *opus integrum*. Deprived of the chant it lacks an element which, though not essential, is something more than a mere accessory, for it adds to the dignity of the Church's prayer. "Sacred music contributes to the decorum and the splendour of ecclesiastical ceremonies." "Music is a part of the liturgy and its humble handmaid." Placed at the service of the liturgy, it is a powerful means of apostolate which should aid, so thinks the Pope, in restoring the true Christian spirit in the world. "Sacred music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful."* We will now explain this twofold object.

(a) *Sacred music gives more glory to God.*—Great thoughts can only find full expression in song. He who loves more than he can say, sings. *Cantare amantis est*, as St. Augustine tells us. Music stirs up feelings in the heart of man, at once elevated, vivid and deep. For instance, the sentiment of patriotism, or the intense love we bear to the country in which we were born and where our ancestors have lived, has given birth among all peoples to a national hymn as an outlet for this feeling. The soul of the entire country vibrates in this song.

* *Motu proprio.*

The Christian—child of the kingdom of heaven—he too has his patriotic hymn, known the world over, sung long ago in the cathedrals by his ancestors in the faith, and echoing on earth the hymn of the heavenly country. The liturgical chant is his national anthem, forming an external bond of union between the faithful of the whole world. Union of voices produces union of hearts. When the same melodies are heard in all the churches of the universe, when man—a being at once corporeal, spiritual and social—prays thus, when the whole multitude chants as with one voice, the voice of the Church, this vast concert goes up before the Most High and gives Him supreme glory. And since, as the proverb says, “His prayer is doubly strong who prays in song,” *bis orat qui cantat*, this prayer is sovereignly efficacious with the Almighty.

Besides, how can we celebrate the greatness of God and the sublimity of Christian dogmas better than by the chant? Chant is an immaterial thing, a breath; it is the utterance of the soul filled with the Holy Ghost. “Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit,” said the Apostle, “speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual canticles.”* And so, as tradition shows us, from earliest times the Church has sung the Psalms, Hymns and Canticles, whose very names are a sufficient indication of their purpose.† When the *Pontifex maximus* had to pronounce a dedicatory formula in performing the

* Eph. v, 19.

† Etymologically a psalm means a song accompanied by a stringed instrument; a hymn is a song of praise; a canticle is a lyric song.

rites of the Roman religion,* the expression *præfari carmen* was used to designate this action; it may be that the word preface—*præfatio* is thence derived.†

The chant to which the Preface was sung was continued without interruption all through the Canon of the Mass, so that even the very words of the consecration were sung.‡

The Collect is also divided, always according to the same plan, into brief and symmetrical formulas adapted for singing. The Greater Litanies were always sung. The chant is, therefore, the original and normal form of public prayer. And a low Mass, that is to say, a Mass not sung, is a diminished rite, as would be a Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament if the *Ave verum*, Litany, or *Tantum ergo* were simply recited instead of being sung.

“The most complete expression of our homage to God—the one that gives Him the most honour and glory, is to be found in the chant. In any other mode of expression there is something wanting. Only when we sing the praises of God do we give Him all that we are and all that we owe.”§ Let us conclude by remarking with Dom Guéranger: “How sad is this silence among Christians, who no longer desire to breathe forth their prayer in song, not realising that chanted prayer is the grandest prayer.”¶

* Consecration of bishops, ordination of priests and deacons, blessing of holy chrism, of the Paschal candle, dedication of churches, etc.

† Conference of Mgr. Batiffol, in the cathedral of Senlis, May 26, 1914.

‡ Dom Cagin: *Eucharistia*, pp. 47 and 48.

§ Moissonet, *ibid.*, p. 35.

¶ *Vie de saint Cécile.*

(b) *Sacred music ensures greater sanctity among the faithful.*—"The principal office of sacred music," says Pius X, "is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful; its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that through it the faithful may be the more easily moved to devotion and better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries."*

Sacred music exercises a powerful influence over the Christian multitude, disposing it to praise God or to ask His forgiveness. By appealing to the noblest part of man through his senses and imagination, this music lifts him up and fills his heart with the emotions which it sets itself to express, whether joy or sorrow. Gregorian chant has nothing in common with dreaminess or vague sentimentality; it does not stop at the senses, it passes beyond them to reach the soul and to entrance it with supernatural delights. In most modern compositions the words are of little consequence so long as they afford the artist an occasion of displaying his talent. Not so in plain chant, which only strives how best to translate the thoughts and intensify the words to which the soul wishes to give expression.† Thanks to its rich and varied tonality, to its rhythm so simple

* *Motu proprio.*

† To take one example among many. In the different *Credos*, as also on Ascension Day, whenever the text says that our Lord has ascended into heaven, the Gregorian melody ascends and helps the soul to follow the Saviour as He returns to His Father and to live in spirit with Him in the heavenly country.

and so majestic, to its neums so manifold in their endless diversity, the official chant of the Church is capable of rendering every shade of Christian dogma, and of giving expression to the breadth as well as the tenderness of Catholic piety. It is truly the voice of prayer, the prayer of the Bride who, together with her heavenly spouse, and under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, lovingly and always unerringly addresses herself to the Father.

The Gregorian cantors do not merely express their own feelings but "even when they are laymen, they are really taking the place of the ecclesiastical choir"*; they interpret certain of the more difficult prayers which are reserved to them by the rules of the ceremonial and they rouse the faithful to devotion in such a way as to direct the thoughts and looks of their hearers not to the tribune but to the altar.

"O my God," exclaims St. Augustine, "what tears did I shed over the hymns and canticles, when the sweet sound of the music of thy Church thrilled my soul! As the music flowed into my ears, and the truth trickled into my heart, the tide of devotion swelled high within me, and the tears ran down, and there was gladness in those tears."†

"When worldlings hear beautiful psalmody," adds St. Bernard, "however hard of heart they may be, they feel at least some beginnings of love for the things of God. It has even been known that one who listened to the chanting of the Psalms

* *Motu proprio.*

† *Confessions of St. Aug.*, bk. ix, ch. vi.

out of natural satisfaction has been moved to shed tears of contrition."

Listening to formulas centuries old, clothed with the rich and graceful folds of sacred and antique melodies, the Christian multitude experiences the thrill of emotion which our ancestors once used to feel in our Roman and Gothic churches. And in this holy exercise, since each benefits by the fervour of all, truth becomes luminous, and the heart is enkindled. It is a meditation made in common and, thanks to the long neums, each soul may feed at leisure on the divine words, ever finding new light therein and saturating the will with these sacred formulas.

"I do not know," says Gounod, "a single work of a great master which can bear comparison with the awe-inspiring majesty of those sublime chants to be heard any day in our churches when funeral ceremonies are being performed: I mean, the *Dies irae* and the *De profundis*. In power of expression and in their overwhelming impressiveness they have no equal."

If sacred music can inspire such holy thoughts, if it can provide the soul with such a wonderful means of expressing itself, it is indeed a precious instrument of sanctification.

The restoration of public worship and of a truly Christian spirit in parishes can often be begun best through the chant. Let plain chant, which is so eminently popular in form, be taught in the already existing societies of children, of young people—both boys and girls—of women and of men; let instructions in liturgy be given to them

and soon a change will be noticed and the flock will be gathered together round the altar, under the blessed authority of its pastor.

And so again we come to the conclusion that the liturgy, this time because the chant is an integral part of it, is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.

(2) THE LATIN LANGUAGE.

“The language proper to the Roman Church is Latin. Hence it is forbidden to sing anything whatever in the vernacular in solemn liturgical functions.”*

“We desire above all things,” writes Pope Benedict XV, “that the Christian people should assist at the Holy Sacrifice with greater attention so that they may derive more benefit therefrom. For the more the faithful take part in that august sacrifice, in which the Redeemer of the human race continues to shed His Blood for us mystically, the more they will enter into possession of all they need to obtain everlasting salvation. Now there are two reasons why the devotion of the people does not progress as it should from hearing Mass, namely, ignorance of the Latin language and ignorance of the liturgy; to both these evils you have, in this volume, applied a remedy. . . . For anyone who is able to read, if he will make use of this book before the altar where the sacrifice is being offered, may easily follow every action of the priest, and from attentive consideration of things

* *Motu proprio.*

so high, he will reap abundant fruits of spiritual consolation and divine grace.”*

“The genius of antiquity,” says Ozanam, “is threefold: to the East is ascribed the genius of contemplation, of symbolism: the Greeks possessed a very marked genius for speculation, for philosophy; that of the Latins lay in action, in legislation. If ancient civilisation was to be handed down unimpaired to modern times, so that nothing might be lost of the intellectual inheritance of mankind, it was necessary that this triple element should be preserved intact; it was necessary that these three spirits, of the East, of Greece and of Rome, should be present in some way to form the soul of the rising nations.”†

These three powers of the ancient world met and became one in the language of the Church. Ecclesiastical Latin was the universal language of the Middle Ages and by it the modern languages have been fashioned. “The Latin language was for a long time the bond of the civilised world. Anyone who could speak Latin found himself at home all over the West and even beyond.”‡ “Latin is the link between the past and present, the sign of that brotherhood which triumphs over distance and brings together races most unlike each other,” writes Dom Guéranger.§

The Latin tongue is therefore a strong tie among

* Letter to M. Marietti, editor of a Latin-Italian Missal. *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, November 23, 1921.

† *La civilisation au V^e siècle*, t. ii, p. 125.

‡ *Liturgical year: Pentecost.*

§ *Inst. lit.*, t. 3.

Christians when, led by their priests, they pray and sing together. St. Francis of Sales recommends us to pray to God in this language: "Say your *Pater, Ave* and *Credo* in Latin . . . so as to join in the universal language of the Church."* Bossuet, eulogising the Princess Palatine, says that "she had been taught Latin because it was the language of the Church."

This bond becomes still closer when the Roman pronunciation is adopted. Indeed, in the opinion of all lovers of Gregorian music, without it plain chant loses something of its suppleness and beauty.

"Is it not fitting," writes Ragon, "and at the same time desirable that the official language of the Church should be pronounced as nearly as possible in the same way by all her children, so that a priest may sing Mass in any country without being bewildered or bewildering those who hear him."†

In a letter to Cardinal Dubois, Pope Pius X spoke of the great satisfaction it gave him to learn "that several dioceses in France had set to work with great zeal to bring about greater conformity with Rome in their pronunciation of Latin."‡

His Holiness Pope Benedict XV also desires "unity in the pronunciation of Latin according to that always used in the centre of Catholicity. By this unity in the pronunciation of a language already so widely known, the people of the present day, like the Christians of former times, would at last possess a common and universal language that

* *Introd. to the devout life.* P. ii, ch. i.

† July 10th, 1913.

‡ *L'enseignement chrétien*, 1907, p. 201.

has so often, though always more or less vainly, been sought elsewhere. The greatly increased possibilities of mutual intercourse would be an additional link in that league of nations so earnestly longed for in order to bring about a lasting peace.”*

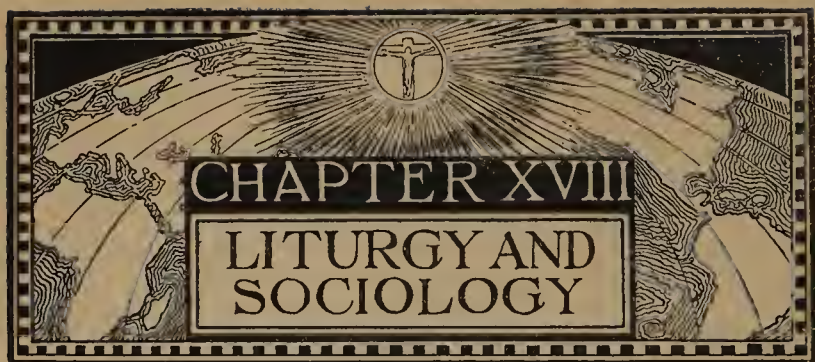
* * * *

How glorious it is when all the faithful closely united to their priests, their bishops, and the Pope, address to God in the liturgy the same prayer, sung in the same language and with the same pronunciation as that of the supreme Pontiff, head of the universal Church! Then truly this prayer is, in the full meaning of the words, one, holy, catholic, apostolic, and Roman, and the desire of our Lord is perfectly realised: “*Sint unum*. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee . . . as we also are one.”†

* Letter of Card. Gasparri to M. l'abbé Delporte.

† John xvii, 21, 23.





THE liturgy has much in common with sociology and that is why the liturgical movement of the present time is bound up with the social movement. One of the fundamental principles of the liturgical apostolate will be precisely to bring them together as closely as possible, and those who seek a solution to the social question cannot afford to ignore the influence exercised by the liturgy.

For the liturgy is essentially social prayer. It is the prayer of the Church as a society, a prayer which gathers together all men, no matter of what country, nation or race, regardless of their birth and condition, and independently of the degree of intelligence or culture to which they may have attained. Children of the old and also of the new Adam, they are all brethren by nature and by grace and all look up to one Father when they say: "Our Father." The petitions they make to Him are always in the plural, and include everything of general necessity; to convince oneself of this it is sufficient to open a Missal and to read there the prayers said by the

priest on Good Friday. This prayer is therefore specially favourable to the development of the social sense, so necessary to those who would fully comprehend the great problems with which modern society is faced. It is quite a mistake to say that the liturgy is not a science of a practical order, for the principles inculcated by it would suffice by themselves alone, according to Cardinal Pie, "to solve the social question."

"Without the liturgy," writes Abbé Vigourel, "all good works would be outside the Christian life, and soon it would appear that, lacking the liturgical sap, that is, the interior support of the Christian religion, they could not be productive of any good nor of lasting benefit."

(In the Middle Ages participation in liturgical worship was the chief means of keeping up a religious spirit among the people. At this period society ordered its public life after the pattern of the life of the Church. "Christmas and Easter," writes Fustel de Coulanges, "were then the greatest joys in life." The Annalists of the time always carefully note the place where Charlemagne and his sons spent these two festivals.

The civil calendar was subordinate to the ecclesiastical calendar. Certain festivals, as for instance those of the Apostles, were kept as holidays. The time for closing the Law Courts depended on liturgical seasons, just as we still speak of the Easter and Christmas vacations. Even the family table gave signs of the approach of the great solemnities of the Church: the late supper after midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, the Easter eggs

and a few other customs still continue to be observed.

“Contracts ceased or were renewed on a date fixed upon because of some festival, as All Saints, St. Martin, Christmas and St. John. The birthday of St. John the Baptist was a time of great rejoicing among our forefathers, and bonfires were kindled on the hills, for instance in the valley of the Rhone, even at the end of the nineteenth century. Not only private gatherings but fairs also were fixed by the Christian calendar.”*

“I have known peasants in the Ardennes,” said G. Kurth, “who called the Sundays after the first words of the Introit of the Mass of each Sunday : *Esto mihi, Invocavit*, having, so to speak, no other calendar than the *Ordo*. It is no longer done now. For them the Church’s prayer was like a rich and ample garment enveloping their whole lives, and by a thousand touching customs they were continually made to feel its pleasant and beneficent warmth.”†

Many socialists, non-Catholics, have been compelled to say that if the churches were closed to religious ceremonies it would not be long before man returned to barbarism. [Society can only find peace on condition that it seeks the divine glory and its own sanctification. Without the curb of religion every passion would be let loose; and religion is to be found above all in liturgical worship which officially binds men to God.

“A society which fails to give God an important

* Abbé Chipier : *La vie liturgique*, p. 349.

† Semaine liturgique de Maredsous : *La liturgie et le peuple*.

place in its public life is bound to sink into a materialism of which the consequences would be fatal even to its natural happiness," says M. Thellier de Poncheville. "If we were to suppress divine worship in our churches, only a few elect souls would find a temple for God in their hearts, and for the greater number this hidden God would soon be forgotten; they would think of Him as a far-off phantom, somewhere beyond the blue vault of heaven and certainly quite beyond their ken.

✓ "God is a principle of unity, and unity is necessary among men; without this divine bond the fellowship of men could not endure.) The altars before which men meet in fraternal union have been deserted and we have seen an altar erected to the golden calf. And fratricidal strife must follow, for men's passions are no longer held in check. It is to this that society comes when it no longer puts in the first place the public acknowledgment of God."*

In a petition addressed to Benedict XV (August, 1920), the same request having been previously made to Leo XIII (June, 1899), permission was asked to celebrate a Mass and Office annually in honour of the social royalty of Christ. "This feast," it was said, "would appear to be a striking opportunity from a social point of view, for no truth has been more systematically denied or ignored in our day than the sovereign right of Jesus Christ in social, civil and temporal affairs.

"Now holy Church is accustomed to define the truths of religion when they are attacked by heresies. This feast, therefore, would educate the

* Congress of Sacred Music at Tourcoing, 1919.

masses, imbued as they are with the false principle that religion is a private affair, and would give them the right ideas as to the place due to our Lord Jesus Christ in society. For the people there is no clearer definition of truth than a feast. Such a feast would virtually re-establish order among men (though the civil administration does not depend on the Church), that order which, since it consists in putting each person and each thing in its proper place, restores to Jesus Christ His due place in society, namely the first place, that reserved for the sovereign."

But the Church has no need to await the answer to this petition; long ago she affirmed in her liturgy this universal character of the royalty of the Incarnate Word.

On the Epiphany Jesus is adored as King of all nations by the three wise kings; "declare to all nations that God reigns from the Cross," says the liturgy of Holy Week; and the Invitatory of Corpus Christi speaks of Christ as the "King—the ruler of nations."

The Kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ over society is, therefore, affirmed in the Cycle of the Church's feasts. If the nations did but know it, they would find the happiness that they seek in vain apart from Him. If they gave to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, the place of honour which belongs to him among the nations and in the world, of which he is the spiritual head, and if they respected the ecclesiastical and civil authorities as representing the authority of God, they would find that peace and prosperity which they look for in vain else-

where. Now this respect for authority, as well spiritual as temporal, which is the basis of all society, is strongly inculcated by the liturgy. The ceremonies which emphasise the majesty of the sovereign Pontiff, successor of St. Peter, are ordained by the liturgy. It decrees special honours to the bishop, whether he pontificates or whether he merely assists at an office. To priests also it gives a right of precedence, such as to command the respect of the faithful. A particular place is set apart for them and is called for this reason the *presbyterium*. The faithful should not intrude there.

The liturgy gives also a high idea of temporal authority. Kings are blessed* amid great pomp and with all the ceremonies of consecration in order to obtain for them the graces they need, and to enhance the majesty of power in the eyes of the people. At this solemn moment sovereigns are reminded of all their duties. "You shall serve God, you shall see that justice is done, for otherwise no society can last long, and you shall show by your conduct that you reign, not for your own advantage but for that of all your people." And the king, kneeling, swears before God and on the Gospels that he will fulfil all his obligations. Whenever he assists at the holy mysteries, he is received with solemnity and conducted to a special place and a richly adorned prie-Dieu. He is even

* This rite was instituted when no organised societies were heard of except kingdoms and empires. It could be applied by the Church to the head of any Catholic State who should place his exalted functions, with the responsibility which they impose, under the divine protection.

incensed before bishops. At the conclusion of the high Mass the Church orders prayers to be said for the king or for the established government. By thus inspiring veneration for the spiritual and temporal rulers and respect for their authority, she promotes in a very marked degree the order, peace and prosperity of States.

In regard to the Mass of the faithful, if the Church recognises the inequality of social conditions founded on the nature of things, she is also careful to remind them that as children of God all are equal in dignity. The churches are open to all, and all have the same rights there; rich and poor, masters and servants mingle together; all seat themselves fraternally round the eucharistic table; all with one voice sing the praises of God.

A story is told of Turenne that going one day to Holy Communion, with eyes cast down and hands joined, he was preceded by one of his servants who, quickly perceiving his mistake, wished to allow his master to pass before him: "Pass on, my Lord."—"My friend," replied Turenne, "there is only one Lord here, He whom we are both about to receive; go before me."

The liturgy also reminds us of our equality, in recalling to us the nothingness of our mortal nature. The ceremony of giving the ashes makes us think of our common origin and destiny: "Thou art dust and into dust thou shalt return." During Advent we are told that Mary alone was exempted from original sin and that because of our sins all the rest of us are, as St. Augustine says, a *massa damnata*.

Yet though we were indeed dead in Adam, we can all live again in Christ who is the Saviour of all. How often the liturgy brings this before us : "The grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men" (Little Chapter of the Circumcision). At Christmas "the King of peace appears and the whole world longs to look upon His countenance" (Antiphon at First Vespers of Christmas). At His Presentation in the Temple, our Lord is called "the light of nations." At the Epiphany the shepherds and the Magi represent all the peoples of the earth : "The nations shall walk in Thy light and kings in the brightness of Thy rising . . . the strength of the nations shall come to Thee" (Epistle). On Holy Saturday, the *Exultet* is, so to speak, the charter of our supernatural fraternity in God, which is based on our regeneration in baptism : "This is the night which throughout the whole world restores to grace and yokes to holiness those that believe in Christ, detaching them from worldly vice and the foulness of sin." The baptismal fonts, blessed by the Church on this day, are the cradle of all the children of God ; and in early times they were born to the divine life in great numbers during the night preceding Easter Sunday : "Thou, O Lord, openest the font of baptism all over the world for the renewal of the gentiles" (Blessing of the font).

On the feast of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descends upon the Church and communicates life to her : "One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is

above all, and through all, and in us all ” (Epistle for the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost). Thus the Church is the mother of all men, and we all belong to her by right. The Pope, the supreme head of the Church, is the common father of this great family. And here we may recall what M. Noblemaire said in his report on the French Embassy to the Vatican (1920): “ Who can deny that the Papacy has always been a great moral force? Is it not the only power which, emanating from a single, never-shifting centre, acts throughout the whole world by identical means, co-ordinated and perfectly adaptable? ”

The liturgical year terminates with the terrifying scene of the end of the world, when all without exception will be brought before their Judge: “ Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty; and he shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them ” (Gospel of the twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost). All, whether mighty or of low degree, will be of equal rank, and the only distinction between them will be that given them by their merits.

* * * * *

In the churches God comes down even to man. Every Sunday the high Mass, with its chant, its poetry, its rites, elevates the heart of the poor as

well as of the rich, of the ignorant as of the learned, above all the contingencies of a material or intellectual order which absorb them during the week. There they find peace and repose after the feverish activity and fatiguing labours of their daily life. There the great Christian virtues are roused into action by readings, sermons, chants and prayers in common, and with Holy Communion bring about unity of minds and hearts. No longer is there rivalry, jealousy, or bitterness; but on the contrary, pardon, reconciliation and love.

“Psalmody,” says St. Ambrose, “cements friendship; it unites those who are at variance; it reconciles those who are at enmity. For who can regard as an enemy the man with whom he has joined in lifting up one voice to God?”

The holy Sacrifice, when Jesus descends upon the altar as once He allowed Himself to be fastened to the Cross, teaches us to obey and gives us the strength to do so. The saints, in whose honour the feasts of the Cycle are celebrated, preach to us charity, the sacrifice of ourselves, and renunciation.

The liturgy is a great teacher, instructing us in the true principles of Christian social order, apart from which one finds only the utopias of socialism or the dangers of individualism as set forth in the “Contrat social,” which, if introduced into the domain of religion, isolates man from his fellows in his relations with God.

Instead of war between races and classes, the liturgy substitutes concord in the bosom of the only realisable international society, namely the Church.

We may conclude this chapter with the remark

that not only for the individual but also for society, the liturgy is "the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit."

Was it not in obedience to this idea that Benedict XV, after having vainly attempted during the terrible time from 1914 to 1918, to do, as he said in his *Motu proprio* of May 9, 1918, "what we know to be our apostolic duty, and what the charity of Jesus Christ prompts us to do," requested "all the Pastors of the Church and all priests, secular and regular, to celebrate a solemn Mass on June 29, feast of SS. Peter and Paul, protectors of the Christian world, that peace and true fraternity might once more reign among all peoples. In this way," he added, "the whole Catholic priesthood, in union with the supreme Pontiff, will offer on every altar in the world the victim of propitiation and love, and will do violence to the heart of God. Then we may assuredly hope that very soon we shall see the realisation of the desire of King David, which is also that of the nations, that 'justice and peace may kiss each other.'"

A few days after, the great offensive began which put an end to the greatest war the world has ever known.





“THE Missal is the eminently liturgical book,” says Dom Guéranger; it should therefore be one of the prayer-books most esteemed and loved by Catholics.

The Missal is the chief Eucharistic book, being the book needed by the priest for saying Mass and by the faithful in order to share in it fully.

“For many centuries, under the name of *Sacramentary*, it contained, grouped around the offering of the holy Sacrifice, all the formulas and rites used in the holy Church of God.”* The chants of the Gradual, Offertory and Communion were gathered together into the Antiphonary, the Epistles and Lessons into the Lectionary, and the Gospels into the Book of the Gospels.

It was found necessary to collect these into one book, which was called Plenary Missal. But the readings and chants were not the same in all countries and the individual character of each church appeared in the order of ceremonies. Soon,

* Dom Baudot: *The Roman Missal*.

therefore, there was a great variety of Missals. The Roman liturgy, however, gradually supplanted the others. In the ninth century, throughout the Carolingian empire, Pepin le Bref sought to abolish the Gallican liturgy and to introduce the Roman Missal in its place. Charlemagne, his son, supported by the learned Benedictine Alcuin, brought still greater zeal to this work.

Dom Plaine, a Benedictine of Ligugé, gives the following example of what a Missal was in France in the tenth century :

THE MISSAL OF SAINT-VOUGAY IN BRITTANY.

(Manuscript of the tenth or eleventh century.)

“In an obscure village of Lower Brittany, only a few miles distant from the sea and from St. Pol de Léon, once an episcopal city, there is a very ancient Missal, which has been reverently preserved from time immemorial. This Missal has been frequently examined by Breton and foreign archæologists, yet it remains for most of them, if not for all, an insoluble enigma.

“. . . Having an opportunity of visiting this village, I naturally wished to see with my own eyes this famous manuscript, and, pen in hand, to examine it leaf by leaf and page by page, in order to gain full information as to the conflicting opinions regarding it. . . .

“I must begin by confessing that the Missal of Saint-Vougay is now only a débris, a fragment of a Missal. Its format is small folio with two columns,

it has both capitals and small letters, some of them illuminated with gold; it contains also musical notation of neums. All this may have caused it to be considered in its time a masterpiece of calligraphy, but it has now unfortunately lost much of its brilliancy and splendour. The gold illuminations have all disappeared through the injury of time, and damp has so far spoilt a great number of letters that it is difficult to distinguish them with the naked eye. Besides all this an extremely unintelligent and careless binder has made the twofold and irreparable mistake of not putting the leaves in any order and of cutting off not only the entire margin but also an inch or two of the writing both from the top and from the sides. Consequently the leaves of this Missal are in utter disorder and more than half of it cannot be deciphered. Finally, as a crowning misfortune, there are now only forty-seven leaves left. All the rest have disappeared with the lapse of time from causes unknown to us. However, the number of Masses or parts of Masses it still contains amounts to sixty-seven, all of them between Christmas Day and the Saturday of Ember Week in September. There are many Masses of Lent and of the weeks of Easter and Pentecost, so that the richest liturgical season is abundantly represented, but we find very few Masses of Saints. . . .

“We will take as an example the Mass of the second Sunday after Easter :

“Introit: *Misericordia Domini*, and Prayer: *Deus qui in filii tui humilitate*, etc. O God, who in the humility of thy Son, etc., as in the Missal now

used. The Epistle, the two Alleluia verses, the Gospel, Offertory and Communion are exactly the same as in the Roman Missal of Saints Pius V and Urban VIII.

“This identity of the text of the Roman Missal and that of the Missal of Saint Vougay is not confined to the Mass of the second Sunday after Easter ; but it is the general law.

“With regard to the Preface, there was one for each feast.

“The Missal of Saint-Vougay is so far Roman, both in text and rubrics, that the Stations of Lent, of the Ember Weeks and of the great festivals of the year are to be found indicated in this Missal exactly in the same way as they were in the Antiphoners of St. Gregory and as they are in the Missals in use at the present time.”

We may here remark how much it is to be regretted that in the Missal for the laity there is no longer any mention of the Stations where the great festivals were celebrated in the Eternal City. This is a point of contact with Rome which has been suppressed.

“We hasten to add,” continues Dom Plaine, “that the Missal of Saint-Vougay has none the less been written for the use of a church in Brittany, probably for the one which still possesses it. The very valuable text of the litany of Holy Saturday furnishes a proof of this, for a great number of Breton Saints are to be found among the Saints invoked.

“The Missal of Saint-Vougay is therefore Roman in its origin and at the same time Breton by reason of the church for which it was written.

“Now what is its probable date? To what century can it belong?”

“The Missal we are studying is one of those called Plenary, *Missalia Plenaria*; now Missals of this kind do not appear before the middle of the ninth century and the most ancient one we know of is a Missal believed to have been used by Pope St. Leo IV (847-855).”

The author proves here that this Missal is later than the ninth and earlier than the twelfth century. I quote here only the last argument he gives in proof of this, for it completes the summary of what a Missal was at that period.

“Finally, another very significant characteristic of the Missal we are studying is, that not only do we find in it the literal text of the prayers and sung parts of the Mass, but also the plain chant notation, which is still joined to the words and makes one whole with them. Now this notation no longer simply gives the first letters of the alphabet, as in the old missals before the ninth century; it is composed of groups of punctus, podatus, clivis and other similar musical groups belonging to the neum notation. On the other hand, this same notation does not present the assemblage of lines, bars and clefs, introduced by the monk Guy of Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century, which contributed so powerfully to simplify and popularise the science of ecclesiastical chant. Now, this happy innovation was adopted in Rome from the time of Pope Benedict VIII (1012-1024).

“Consequently, the Missal of Saint-Vougay, which is the faithful reproduction of Roman

Missals, ought also to show traces of this innovation, unless it were of an earlier date than the beginning of the eleventh century.”

* * * *

Until the sixteenth century the uniformity of missals was not complete. At that time the Council of Trent appointed a Commission, which resulted in a reform made by St. Pius V in 1570, imposing the Roman Missal on the whole Church. Clement VIII (1604), Urban VIII (1634) and, finally, Pius X (in 1912) and his successor, Benedict XV (in 1920) made in it certain changes and improvements. Therefore, with a few exceptions, allowed by lawful authority, the Missals of the whole Catholic Church are all alike ; in all of them there are some Masses proper to each diocese, but otherwise they all contain the same Roman liturgy, now more than a thousand years old.

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The Missal now in use is divided into three principal parts : the Proper of the Time, the Proper of the Saints, and the Ordinary of the Mass, inserted between Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

We have already explained the two Propers ; we have only to add a few words on that part of the Mass which does not vary.

During the first Christian centuries, the prayers of the liturgy were not written but improvised on an invariable theme called the Canon or Rule of Consecration. “He who presides gives thanks as

long as he can," writes St. Justin in the second century. The text of the Canon as we now possess it seems to have been fixed since the time of St. Leo in the fifth century, for in one of the lessons in the Breviary for his feast mention is made of the four words he added to the prayer: *Supra quæ, viz. Sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam.*

"Towards the year 600, St. Gregory the Great also added some words to the fourth prayer of the Canon: *Hanc igitur, viz. Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas*, an addition which caused such surprise throughout the Church, that one can hear some echoes of it as late as the eighteenth century. The Canon, the most sacred of all prayers, has therefore undergone no modification since the end of the sixth century. It exactly represents the ancient prayer said in the early centuries of the Church, a prayer essentially one, drawn up according to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, the tradition of the Apostles and the teaching of holy pontiffs guided by the Holy Ghost" (Council of Trent). Happy those who say this prayer of the Canon during Mass at the same time as the priest, for they thus become intimately united with the generations of Christians who have preceded them.

Of the Missal especially it can be said: "Throughout how many centuries have the faithful prayed in these words! What emotions, what joys, what affections, what tears have found their expression in this book, these rites and these prayers!"*

* Origins of Christian Worship: Preface. Duchesne.

We should therefore value the Missal. In the Introits, Graduals, Offertories and Communions, it contains verses from a hundred and twenty-eight Psalms, formerly sung in their entirety, extracts from the five books of the Pentateuch, from the seven Historical books, from the seven Poetical and Sapiential books, seventeen extracts from the eleven Prophetical books, and more than four hundred and fifty passages from the four Gospels, (as well as parts of nearly all the Epistles.

We may therefore say of the Missal what Mgr. Gay said of the Gospel: "It is the providential form under which the Word of God has willed to make Himself accessible to every soul." Formerly therefore nothing was spared to make the Book of the Gospels very precious by richly decorating it interiorly and exteriorly. It was kept in costly and perfumed caskets, and, like the sacred vessels of the altar, when carried about, it was wrapped in some rich material.

The ceremonial of bishops says that the Gospel Book must be covered with silk material of the same colour as the vestments.* Since it contains the word of God, it is not possible to show it too much reverence.

We should therefore possess a Missal, a beautiful one, quite complete, with, for instance, the Masses of every day in Lent, and moreover well bound. Nor should we grudge the expense, since it will last our lifetime.†

* L. i, c. xii, no. 15. L. ii, c. xi, no. 1.

† To supply this want, the Daily Missal with Vespers for Sundays

“A director,” writes Abbé Chipier, “has not to deal with souls in general, but with individual souls. Although he may have gone through a complete course of theological and religious studies, yet there will be subjects which attract him. He will therefore be a specialist in spite of himself and will tend to influence souls in the same direction. But if he persuades the persons confided to his care to use a Missal constantly and reminds them of it by the sacramental penance he gives, they will find therein the whole mind and heart of the Church, and consequently the food needed by their spiritual temperament.”*

Let this golden book, therefore, from some points of view the most beautiful in existence, be our friend, the book always beside us, which we read with holy eagerness every day of our earthly exile, for in it the Church, with the infallibility she possesses in matters of faith and morals, points out to us the way to heaven.

There will then be continuity in our spiritual life; we shall have greater esteem for our holy Mother the Church, who gives us the Missal and speaks to us through it, we shall drink in the Christian spirit from its primary and indispensable source, we shall love the Holy Eucharist, set before

and Feasts is being published, of which the French edition “*Missel quotidien et Vespéral*” (Abbaye de St. André par Lophem-lez-Bruges), has had an unprecedented success (105,000 copies in the first two years).

* *La vie liturgique*, p. 87.

us every day in a new light, and our devotion will accord more and more with that of our priests.

Thus we shall be fully united with the whole of Christ's mystical Body in the infinite worship given by its Head, our Lord Jesus Christ, to His Father, and after beginning this worship in this present life, we shall take part in it for ever in eternity.





CONCLUSION

WE have seen how, through the liturgy, the adoration and worship due to the most Holy Trinity finds a worthy expression. This worship is rendered officially by our Lord Jesus Christ and the sacred Hierarchy, that is, the priests in union with their bishops and the Pope, in all the parishes of the world attached to the cathedrals and to St. Peter's at Rome.

The holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacraments and the holy Scriptures are the treasures entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ to His Church, who uses them in the liturgy for the glory of the Blessed Trinity and for the benefit of her children.

The liturgy also includes—in order that their value may be appreciated—Sacramentals, that is, prayers and rites adapted to the liturgical seasons celebrated during the year.

The Church addresses herself to God, the one only Father, from whom flows all paternity (*Pater noster*), through the one only High Priest (*per Christum Dominum nostrum*), and by the impulse of one Spirit (*unus spiritus*), in the unity of one mystical Body brought into being by one baptism and nourished by one same Eucharistic Bread.

And, in virtue of the very priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which it participates, the Catholic hierarchy (one in extent : priests, bishops,

Pope ; parish churches, cathedrals, Roman basilicas), and apostolic (one in time : Pope and bishops, successors of St. Peter and the Apostles), offers to the Blessed Trinity, on one and the same altar (altar of the Holy Eucharist), one and the same Victim in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the renewal of the one only sacrifice of Calvary.

This liturgy is one throughout all ages, for it was shown in figure in the Old Testament, it was inaugurated by our Lord at the Last Supper and on the Cross, and it is continued on earth by the Church and consummated in heaven by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is ever interceding for us, together with all the angels and saints.

* * * * *

Now, therefore, it only remains for us to realise this ideal. With this end in view, we will conclude by giving the essential principles which may form the programme of action for the liturgical apostolate.

LITURGICAL APOSTOLATE.

I. Aim. — “To restore in Christ” Christian society, by causing it to

(1) Glorify God by the becoming and reverent celebration of the official worship which is due to Him.

(2) Sanctify itself by taking an active part in the liturgy, which is, according to Pius X, “the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit.”

II. Means of Action.—Those who work at the liturgical Apostolate should endeavour :

(1) To keep before them, as the final and constant object of their worship, the three august Persons of the Holy Trinity, remembering that before it all the Saints and Angels, with Mary their Queen and the Sacred Humanity of Jesus itself, are prostrate in adoration.

(2) To adore God the Father, First Person of the Blessed Trinity, through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest (present in the Holy Eucharist) and under the impulse of the grace of the Holy Spirit.

(3) To make use, in their prayers, of the sacerdotal mediation of the Catholic hierarchy, whose members are the ministers of the official worship of the Church. They should, therefore, take pleasure in praying in union with the Pope, with their bishop and especially with their parish priest. They should show public marks of respect to the clergy, wherever they meet them.

(4) To attend, if they can conveniently do so, their cathedral or parish church, in order to receive there the bread of doctrine and the Bread of the Eucharist from their priest or from those who take his place. They should show respect to the churches where our Lord dwells in the Blessed Sacrament and should strive to adorn the church, where they were born to supernatural life. On Sundays, as a general rule, they should be present at the High Mass.

(5) To make the holy Sacrifice of the Mass the centre of their spiritual life, by assisting at it every

day, if possible, so that by this means they may unite their daily sufferings to those of Jesus on Calvary.

(6) To communicate often and especially on Sundays and festivals; they should, if possible, make the same preparation as the priest, in order first to offer to God the Blood of Jesus, which gains pardon for us and then to receive the kiss of peace and the graces bestowed on us in holy Communion.

(7) To have an ever-growing appreciation of the Sacraments provided by the Church for her children during the course of their lives and always to make an earnest and fitting preparation.

(8) To make frequent use of the Sacramentals the Church employs in her worship: holy water, blessed candles, ashes, palms; the *Pater*, the *Confiteor*, etc. They should try to penetrate ever more deeply into the meaning of the rites and ceremonies belonging to the Mass and the Sacraments. They will often be helped in this by sermons and homilies.

(9) To be present at some part of the Canonical Office, especially on Sunday at Vespers and Compline and to these they should seek to give back something of their former splendour.

(10) To direct their prayers, even their private devotions,—as, for example, their daily meditation,—according to the anniversaries of the Life of Christ celebrated by the Church in her Calendar, in order to become fully imbued during the year with the spirit of each liturgical season: Advent, Christmas, etc. They should live the life of the

Church in her liturgy, celebrating with her the Vigils, Octaves, Rogation Days, Masses of the Ferias of Lent, Blessings of the Candles, of the Ashes, of the Palms, etc.

(11) To observe, in their devotion to the Saints, the order established by Pius X in his reform of the Breviary, which consists in honouring, after the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, then the holy angels, St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, the holy Apostles, etc.

(12) As far as possible to take an active part in the public prayers of the Church by reciting the liturgical formulas, and especially by the chant, above all, by the Gregorian chant, the official chant of the Church. This they should study in schools of Gregorian chant.

(13) To use, by preference, the formulas of the Church's prayer contained in the Breviary and especially in the Missal, which should be their chief prayer-book.

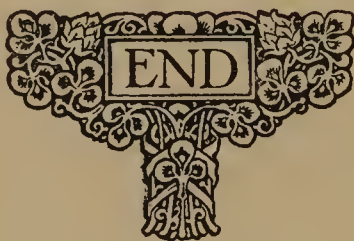
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Thus they will go, through our Lord Jesus Christ, with Him and in Him and His Church, in the Holy Ghost, to the Father, to whom be all honour and glory, for ever and ever.

* * * *

III. Results.—These are pointed out to us, we may say, in the encouraging words addressed by Benedict XV to the organisers of the Liturgical Congress held at the Abbey of Montserrat in Spain in July, 1915 :

“To spread among the faithful an exact knowledge of the liturgy ; to inspire into their hearts a holy delight in the prayers, rites and chants by means of which, in union with their common Mother, they pay their worship to God, to attract them to take an active part in the holy mysteries and ecclesiastical festivals ; all this would have a wonderful influence in drawing priest and people together, in bringing back the people to the Church, by nourishing their piety, strengthening their faith and teaching them to lead lives of perfection.”



APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Application and distribution of the subjects contained in The Catechism of the Council of Trent,—according to the Gospels for every Sunday of the year arranged for sermons and familiar instructions.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

There shall be signs in the sun, etc. St. Luke xxi. On the general judgement.

See the article of the Creed: *He shall come to judge*, etc.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

When John had heard in prison, etc. Matt. xi. On the care we should take to learn the truths of faith, and to instruct others.

See the *introduction*, as far as the *first article of the Creed*.

In prison, etc. We must confess the faith of Jesus Christ publicly, and even at the peril of our lives.

See the *first article of the Creed*.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John confessed and did not deny. John i. The duty of speaking the truth simply. On the oath. When it is permitted, etc.

See the *second Commandment*.

Why then dost thou baptise, if thou be not Christ? On the ministers of the sacrament of Baptism. On what the effect of the sacrament depends. See *Baptism*.

I am not worthy to loose, etc. On preparation for the reception of the sacrament of the altar. See the *Eucharist*.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar . . . the word of the Lord came unto John. Luke iii. On the vocation and mission of ministers of the Church. See the *sacrament of Order*.

In the wilderness. On the sacerdotal virtues, sanctity, chastity. *Ibid.*

Preaching the baptism of penance. Dispositions for receiving baptism in mature age. See *Baptism*.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, etc. On preparation for the Eucharist. See the *Eucharist*. On the due observance of the Commandments of God. See the *declogue* in general.

CHRISTMAS

She brought forth her first-born Son. Luke ii. Explain simply the birth of Jesus Christ. See the article of the Creed: *born of the Virgin Mary*.

In the beginning was the Word. John i. On the eternal generation of Jesus Christ. *Ibid.*

And the Word was made flesh. Explain the mystery of the Incarnation. *Ibid.*

The glory of the only-begotten of the Father. How Jesus Christ is our Brother. See the explanation of the *Our Father*.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

Thy own soul a sword shall pierce. Luke ii. Why God does not exempt His children from the ills of life. See on *Baptism*.

To whom must we have recourse in suffering? See on *Prayer in general*.

CIRCUMCISION

After eight days were accomplished. Luke ii. On the power and effects of the sacraments of the New Law. See on *Sacraments* in general.

His name was called Jesus. On the name Jesus Christ. See the second article of the Creed.

EPIPHANY

We have seen His star in the East. Matt. ii. The difference between Christian wisdom and philosophy. See the *introduction* and the *Creed* in general.

And falling down they adored Him. On the adoration due to God, see the first precept of the *decalogue*. On the adoration due to the Blessed Sacrament. See on the *Eucharist*.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE EPIPHANY

According to the custom of the feast. Luke ii. *He was subject to them.* *Ibid.* Duties of children to their parents. See the *fourth commandment*.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

There was a marriage in Cana. John ii. On the sacrament of Matrimony.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus. Transubstantiation might be explained and examples given for the instruction of the people and those ignorant of this mystery.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Behold a leper came and adored Him. Matt. viii. Leprosy signifies heresy. Who are heretics? See the ninth article of the *Creed*.

Go, show thyself to the priest. On the respect and honour to be shown to priests. See the fourth commandment of God.

Or, on the power of the Church to remit sins. See the tenth article of the *Creed*.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

When Jesus entered into the boat. Matt. viii. On the true Church. See the ninth article of the *Creed*.

Lord, save us, we perish. On the necessity of having recourse to the sacraments and to Extreme Unction when in danger of death. See the sacrament of Extreme Unction.

What manner of man is this, for the winds and the sea obey Him? All creatures obey God and man refuses to obey. See the explanation of the words of the Our Father: Thy will be done, etc.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

His enemy oversowed cockle among the wheat. Matt. xiii. On the good and the bad members of the Church. See the ninth article of the Creed.

Or, on hatred and dissension which disturb the peace of the children of God. See the explanation of these words: Lead us not into temptation.

An enemy hath done this. On the hatred shown us by the devil—and on temptations. See the same place.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed. Matt. xiii. On faith, signified by the grain of mustard; its excellence, its necessity, and the means of preserving it. See *on faith*, at the beginning of the Creed.

Until the whole was leavened. On the communion of saints. Ninth article of the Creed.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

The kingdom of heaven is like to a householder. Matt. xx. God is our Father, the Father of a great family. First article of the Creed. Preface to the Lord's Prayer.

They received every man a penny. On eternal life, twelfth article of the Creed; or on the words of the Lord's Prayer: Thy kingdom come.

Every man a penny. Rewards, like punishments, differ according to merits; twelfth article of the Creed.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

The sower went out to sow his seed. Luke viii. On the word of God. See on the words: Give us this day our daily bread. How we should listen to it. See the Introduction.

The devil cometh, etc. On the methods of attack practised by the devil. See on the words : Lead us not into temptation.

The cares and riches, etc. How contrary is the desire of riches to the fruits of the divine word in our hearts. See on the words : Thy will be done.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

He shall be delivered to the Gentiles. Luke xviii. On the Passion of Jesus Christ, to Christians the motive of penance. See the fourth article of the Creed.

A blind man sat by the wayside. On the miseries of mankind in consequence of sin. See on the words : Thy will be done.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. On the necessity and the manner of prayer. See on prayer in general.

What wilt thou that I do to thee? The reason why God wills that we should pray. *Ibid.*

ASH WEDNESDAY

When thou fastest, etc. Matt. vi. On the necessity of penance. See on the sacrament of Penance, and on satisfaction.

Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth. On those who seek to become rich. See the seventh Commandment, and on the words : Give us this day our daily bread.

Lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven. On almsgiving. See the seventh Commandment, and on the words : Forgive us our trespasses.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

To be tempted by the devil. Matt. iv. On temptations ; see on the words : Lead us not into temptation.

Not in bread alone doth man live. On spiritual bread. See on the words : Give us our daily bread.

He hath given His angels charge over thee. On the guardian angels. See on the words : Our Father who art in heaven.

The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, etc. On adoration by faith, hope and charity. See the first Commandment.

Catholic Liturgy

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus taketh unto him Peter. Matt. xvii. When are men best disposed to meditate on holy truths? See on prayer in general.

It is good to be here. On eternal life. See the 12th article of the Creed.

This is my beloved Son. On the eternal generation of Jesus Christ. See the twelfth article of the Creed.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

He was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb. Luke xi. On confession, from which the devil endeavours to keep people away.

Every kingdom divided against itself, etc. The Church is the kingdom of God. See on the words: Thy kingdom come. But this kingdom must be one. See on the unity of the Church, the ninth article of the Creed.

I will return into my house. On falling again into sin, and on what has to be done after confession. See on Confession.

Then he taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself. On temptations and on their author the devil, see the words: Lead us not into temptation.

Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, etc. On the blessed Virgin. See the third article of the Creed.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Whence shall we buy bread? John vi. Explain the words: Give us this day our daily bread, or speak of holy Communion.

And this He said to try him. How God tries men. See on the words: Lead us not into temptation.

He distributed to them, etc. The word of God is made known through the apostles and their successors, as of old through the prophets. See the introduction.

This is the prophet. On the work of grace. See on prayer in general.

PASSION SUNDAY

Which of you shall convince Me of sin? John viii. Our sins,

not His, the cause of Christ's Passion. See on the fourth article of the Creed.

If I say the truth to you. On lying. See the eighth Commandment.

He that is of God heareth the words of God. On the word of God. See the introduction and the explanation of the words: Give us our daily bread.

Do not we say well that thou art a Samaritan? On forgiving injuries. See the words: Forgive us, etc.

I honour my Father, and you have dishonoured me. On those who pervert the word of God. See the second Commandment.

They took up stones to cast at Him. The time and manner of the death of Christ. See the fourth article of the Creed.

PALM SUNDAY

Behold thy king cometh to thee, meek. Matt. xxi. On Communion. Duty of and dispositions for Communion. Communion of children.

GOOD FRIDAY

The Passion of Jesus Christ. John xviii, xix. Fourth article of the Creed. On the infinite love of God for men, whom He has redeemed by the death of His Son. See on the words: Our Father, who art in heaven.

Fall of the first man, miseries which have ensued. Second article of the Creed.

Jesus Christ is the gate of heaven. Second article of the Creed.

EASTER SUNDAY

He is risen, He is not here. Mark xvi. See the article of the Creed, He rose again from the dead.

EASTER MONDAY

Two of them went, etc. Luke xxiv. The Resurrection might be spoken of again.

Ought not Christ to have suffered? On the causes which made the Saviour's resurrection necessary. See the fifth article of the Creed. The faithful, after the example of Jesus Christ, must labour to gain heaven. See on the words : *Thy kingdom come.* On the advantages of tribulation. See on the words : *Deliver us from evil.*

EASTER TUESDAY

Jesus stood in the midst of them. Luke xxiv. Qualities of a glorious body. See the eleventh article of the Creed.

Peace be to you. On the peace of the kingdom of God. See on the words : *Thy kingdom come.*

That penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name. On the remission of sins. See the tenth article of the Creed.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

When it was late that same day. John xx. On the resurrection of Christ, the pattern of our own. See the fifth article of the Creed.

Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. Remission of sins by the power of the keys confided to the Church. See tenth article of the Creed.

Put in thy finger hither, etc. Of the body after the resurrection, etc. See eleventh article of the Creed.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

I am the Good Shepherd. John x. Duties of pastors and faithful. See the fourth Commandment of God.

The hireling, he that is not the shepherd. Who is the shepherd and who the hireling? See on the Sacrament of Orders.

There shall be one fold and one Shepherd. On the unity of the Church. See the ninth article of the Creed. On the primacy of the Pope. *Ibid.*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

A little while and now you shall not see Me. John xvi. The passing trials of life, endured for Jesus Christ, will be

rewarded by everlasting happiness. See on eternal life—in the twelfth article of the Creed.

You shall lament and weep, but the world will rejoice. Why the devil attacks the good rather than the bad. See on the words: Lead us not into temptation.

Your sorrow shall be turned into joy. The hope of future happiness helps us to bear contrary things in this life. See eleventh and twelfth articles of the Creed. Why God allows the good to be afflicted. See on the words: Lead us not into temptation.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you. John xvi. On the Holy Ghost and His admirable gifts. See the eighth article of the Creed.

He will convince the world of sin. The Holy Spirit inspires remorse and contrition. See what is said of contrition, the sacrament of Penance.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

If you ask the Father anything in My name. On prayer through Jesus Christ. See on qualities of prayer, prayer in general.

ASCENSION DAY

And the Lord Jesus . . . was taken up into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God. Mark xvi. See the sixth article of the Creed.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE ASCENSION

When the Paraclete cometh . . . who proceedeth from the Father. John xv. On the procession of the Holy Ghost. See eighth article of the Creed.

The hour cometh that whosoever killeth you, etc. John xvi. On the fifth Commandment of God.

He will think that he doeth a service to God. The evils of life are a sign of divine goodness towards us. See on the words : Deliver us from evil.

WHITSUNDAY

If any one love Me, he will keep My word. John xiv. On the Commandments of God and fidelity in observing them. See the decalogue in general. Or, on the sacrament of Confirmation.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK

God so loved the world, etc. John iii. On the goodness of God to men in the creation and government of the world and above all in the redemption. See on the words : Our Father who art in heaven.

That whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish. Faith in Jesus Christ has been necessary from the beginning. See on the second article of the Creed.

He that believeth in Him is not judged. What is faith ? See the beginning of the introduction.

Because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son. How Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of the Father. See the second article of the Creed. And how He has at the same time many brethren. See on the words : Our Father—towards the end.

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK

He that entereth not by the door. John x. On the hierarchy of the Church. See the sacrament of Order.

The sheep hear his voice. On the obedience due to the pastors of the Church. See the fourth Commandment.

A stranger they follow not. On heretics. See the introduction and the ninth article of the Creed.

TRINITY SUNDAY

All power is given to Me. Matt. xxviii. On the kingdom and power of Jesus Christ. See the tenth article of the Creed.

the sacraments in general, and the words : Thy kingdom come.

Baptising them, etc. On Baptism, its necessity.

In the name of the Father, etc. On the mystery of the blessed Trinity. See the first article of the Creed.

Teaching them to observe, etc. On the obligation of obeying the law of God, and the means to be employed. See on the Commandments in general.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful, etc. Luke vi. See the explanation of the words : Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive, etc.

Give and it shall be given to you. On the duty of helping one's neighbour. See on the words : Give us this day our daily bread.

CORPUS CHRISTI

My flesh is meat indeed. John vi. See on the sacrament of the Eucharist.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A certain man made a great supper. Luke xiv. On the everlasting happiness which will be given to us in the next life. See the twelfth article of the Creed, and the words : Thy kingdom come. Or, on the sacrament of the altar.

They began all at once to make excuse. On unrestrained passions and on the misery of man in rejecting what is good. See the ninth and tenth Commandments, and the words : Thy will be done.

I have bought a farm. On pride and ambition. See section vii of prayer in general.

I have bought five yoke of oxen. On avarice. See the seventh Commandment.

I have married a wife. Against sensuality. See the sixth Commandment.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

There shall be more joy in heaven, etc. Luke xv. Motives for conversion and penance. See on Contrition and on the words : Forgive us our trespasses, etc.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The multitude pressed upon Him, etc. Luke v. On the word of God. See introduction and the third Commandment.

Going up into one of the ships that was Simon's. On the head of the Church. See the ninth article of the Creed.

Depart from me, O Lord. On the dispositions necessary for Communion.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

You have heard that it was said to them of old, etc. Matt. v. See on the sixth Commandment.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I have compassion on the multitude. Mark viii. On the fatherly providence of God in our regard. See on the words : Our Father, who art in heaven.

If I shall send them away fasting . . . they will faint in the way. Man can do nothing pleasing to God without His help. See on the words : Thy will be done.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Beware of false prophets. Matt. vii. On heretics. See ninth article of the Creed.

Shall be cast into the fire. On the fire and torments of hell. See the Creed : He shall come to judge, etc.

But he that doth the will of my Father. On the will of God. See the third petition of the Our Father.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Give an account of thy stewardship. Luke xvi. Of the account we must render to God when we depart this life. See seventh article of the Creed.

Make unto you friends, etc. On almsgiving. See fourth and fifth petitions of the Our Father. Or, on the invocation of saints. See first Commandment.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

He wept over it. Luke xix. On contrition for sin.

If thou hadst known, etc. Our greatest misery is that we know not our misery. See on the words: Thy will be done.

For the days shall come upon thee; and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, etc. On the abuse of God's benefits. See on the words: Lead us not into temptation.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The Pharisee prayed thus with himself. Luke xviii. The qualities of prayer. See on prayer in general.

O God, be merciful to me. Repentance, humility, sincerity in prayer. *Ibid.*

Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled, etc. On the humility of Jesus Christ, the condemnation of our pride. See the second and third articles of the Creed.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

They besought Him that He would lay His hand upon him. Mark vii. We can and should pray for others. How and why? See on prayer in general.

He put his fingers into his ears. On the ceremonies of Baptism and their meaning.

Looking up to heaven, he groaned. On the evils brought upon us by sin. See on the words: Our Father, who art in heaven.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Thou shalt love the Lord, etc. Luke x. See the beginning of the explanation of the decalogue and the first Commandment.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the misery of man in consequence of sin. See the second article of the Creed and on the words : Deliver us from evil.

A certain Samaritan . . . pouring in oil and wine, etc. On the sacraments considered as remedies for our spiritual evils. See on the sacraments in general.

Take care of him. The human race and the Church confided by Jesus Christ to one man alone. See the ninth article of the Creed.

Which of these three in thy opinion was neighbour, etc. Who is our neighbour ? See on the eighth Commandment, section 1 *et seq.*

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jesus, master, have mercy on us. Luke xvii. On the holy name of Jesus. See the second article of the Creed.

Go, shew yourselves to the priests. On confession and contrition.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Be not solicitous, etc. Matt. vi. On the fatal consequences of evil desires. See on the ninth and tenth Commandments.

Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. God wills that we should make known to Him our needs in prayer. See on prayer in general.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. On the manner of praying. See the second petition of the Our Father.

All these things shall be added unto you. How we are to ask for temporal things. See on the words : Give us this day our daily bread, etc.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

He that was dead, sat up. Luke vii. On the resurrection of the flesh. See the eleventh article of the Creed.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? Luke xiv. On the sanctification of Sunday. See the third Commandment.

When thou art invited, etc. On Christian humility. See the fifth Commandment.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Thou shalt love the Lord, etc. Matt. xxii. See the Gospel for the twelfth Sunday.

What think you of Christ? On Jesus Christ. See the second article of the Creed.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jesus seeing their faith. Matt. ix. On baptism which justifies children through the faith of their parents and of the Church.

Thy sins are forgiven thee. On the power of remitting sin. See the tenth article of the Creed and the sacrament of Penance.

He blasphemeth. On blasphemy. See the second Commandment.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A king made a marriage for his son. Matt. xxii. On the sacrament of Matrimony.

Having treated them contumeliously, put them to death. On slander, detraction and injury. See the fifth Commandment.

Cast him into the exterior darkness. On the sentence and punishment of the wicked. See the seventh article of the Creed.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

There was a certain ruler whose son was sick. John iv. On the miseries of man; see on the words: Give us this day our daily bread; and on the words: Deliver us from evil.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Pay what thou owest. Matt. xviii. On the restitution to be made by those who have wronged their neighbour. See the seventh Commandment.

If you forgive not every one his brother. Explain this petition of the Our Father: Forgive us, etc.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker. Matt. xxii. On flattery and lying. See the eighth Commandment.

Render to Cæsar, etc. Duties towards rulers and superiors. See the fourth Commandment.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A certain ruler came up, and adored Him, saying, etc. Matt. ix. We should have recourse to God in sickness. See on the words: Deliver us from evil.

My daughter is even now dead. On death and the last things. See the seventh and twelfth articles of the Creed, and the sacrament of Extreme Unction.

If I shall touch only His garment. On the veneration of the saints and their relics. See the first Commandment.

When Jesus was come into the house of the ruler, etc. On consoling the sick by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass and by prayer. See the sacrifice of the Mass and on prayer in general.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

When you shall see the abomination of desolation, etc. Matt. xxiv. On the signs which will appear before the last judgement. See the seventh article of the Creed.

Pray that your flight be not in the winter, etc. It is lawful to ask God for temporal favours, and the manner in which we should ask. See the words: Give us this day, etc.

But for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened. On the power of the devil to tempt men. See on the words: Lead us not into temptation.

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